

W. G.





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THE LIVES  
OF  
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS.

CHIEFLY WRITTEN BY THEMSELVES.

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

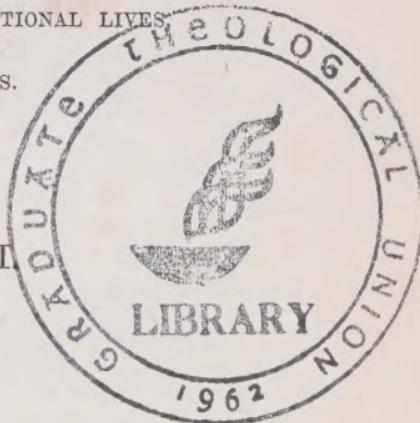
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THOMAS JACKSON.

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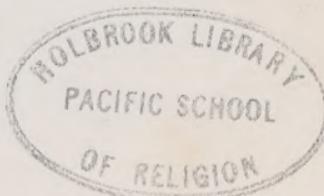


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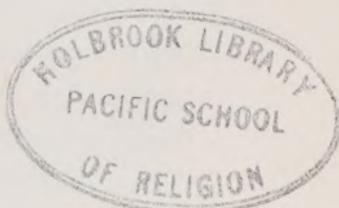
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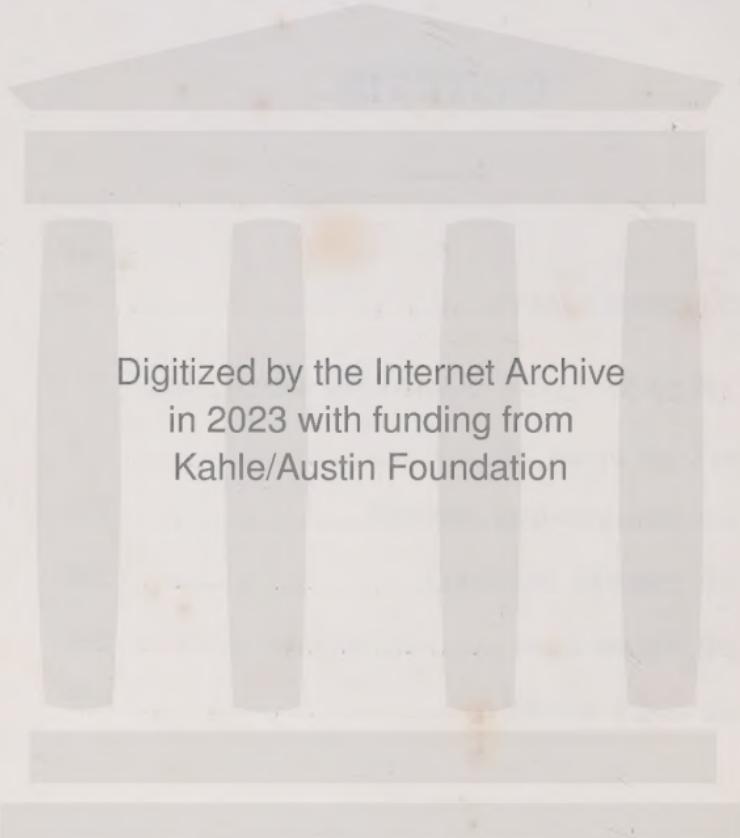
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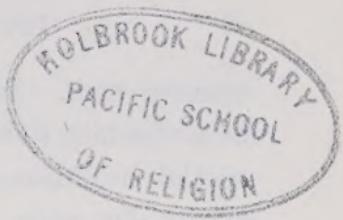
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## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

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"**T**HREE are many devices in a man's heart ; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." (Prov. xix. 21.) This maxim of inspired wisdom receives a striking illustration in the personal history of the Rev. John and Charles Wesley. These eminent men were trained in the belief and practice of the strictest churchmanship ; so that they would have thought it a sin to deviate from the rubric, to conduct public worship in an unconsecrated place, or to countenance the ministrations of a man on whose head the hands of a prelate had never been laid. Yet these very men were so controlled by the providence and grace of God, as to be a means of introducing, and that upon an extensive scale, a freedom of religious action, such as had scarcely been witnessed in any country since the apostolic age.

In them an exact adherence to ecclesiastical order was connected with defective and even erroneous views of Christian godliness, as it is described in the New Testament. They placed before themselves a high standard of personal sanctity, including purity of heart, the uninterrupted exercise of self-denial, the utmost rectitude of speech and action, combined with zealous efforts to do good both to the bodies and

souls of men. In attempting to attain to this state of conformity to the will of God, they directed their special attention to the precepts and example of Christ, but with only an inadequate recognition of His priestly office and character. They did not, indeed, deny the fact that He died as a propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and ever lives to plead the merit of His death in behalf of sinners upon earth; but they did not with sufficient explicitness regard His mediation as the only ground of their acceptance with God. To the real nature and the appointed method of a sinner's justification, their attention was seldom, if ever, directed; and much less had they any just conception of the connexion between the forgiveness of sin and personal sanctification. Entire devotedness to God was the one object of their desire and aim; supposing that their sins would be forgiven in the hour of death, or in the day of judgment; but upon what ground, or in what manner, they knew not, and forbore to inquire. The thought, that they must be delivered from the curse of the violated law of God, before He would impart the Holy Spirit to them in the fulness of His sanctifying power, appears never to have entered their minds.

In this state they were found by Peter Böhler, a pious evangelist from Germany, according to their own confession,

“Lost, and confused, and dark, and blind;”

working in chains; striving against sin, and yet enslaved by it; seeking rest for their souls, not by

simple faith in the blood of the cross, but as it were by the works of the law. By this enlightened stranger they were taught to come to Christ as mere sinners ; guilty, to be forgiven ; miserable, to be made happy ; assured that in this manner they would obtain full and free acceptance with God, be filled with peace and joy, love God from a sense of His love to them, and be delivered from the bondage of sin both in heart and life.

These seasonable instructions they gratefully accepted, and immediately realized their truth. From this time their spiritual enjoyments were rich and abounding. They understood the Holy Scriptures as they had never understood them before ; and they longed to make known to others the nature, value, high importance, and the appointed method, of the salvation which they themselves enjoyed. From the pulpits of the metropolitan churches they immediately began to preach, with becoming warmth and earnestness, the doctrine of present salvation from sin by faith in Christ crucified ; and thousands of people flocked to hear the joyful tidings, which not a few of them received in the love of the truth. But to the generality of the clergy and the parochial authorities the doctrine was unwelcome ; and the heat which was caused by the presence of eager crowds was annoying to the regular church-goers ; so that the pulpits were at once closed against the brothers, whose teaching was as strange to the ears of London as was that of St. Paul to the Athenians, and that of the Protestant Reformers to the people of

their day. Their doctrine was charged with novelty, though it had been taught by the martyrs of Smith-field, as well as by the apostles of Christ, and was embodied in the formularies of the national Church.

With their strong conviction of the truth of what they taught, confirmed by deep personal experience, it was impossible that they should remain silent, commissioned as they felt themselves to be by the Great Head of the church. The only resource that was left to them was the open air; and, therefore, in fields, under the wide canopy of heaven, they took their stand, called sinners to repentance, and offered to all who obeyed the call a full, free, and present salvation. They met with most encouraging success; so that, in a short time, of some thousands it might be said,

“They have heard the glad sound, they have liberty found  
Through the blood of the Lamb,  
And plenteous redemption in Jesus’s name.”

To an intelligent observer, who was duly attentive to the signs of the times, it must have appeared manifest, that a ministry different in many respects from that which then prevailed in England would speedily appear. The people who received the doctrine of present salvation from the guilt, the misery, and the dominion of sin, freely obtained by faith in Christ crucified, and who realized its truth in their own happy experience, would desire in perpetuity to hear the same doctrine, and other essential verities connected with it. Never would they be satisfied with

sermons which treated only of moral duties, and which failed to present either evangelical motives, or spiritual privileges and blessings. A craving for intellectual food, adapted to their present religious state, was created in them, and must be gratified. When St. Paul and Barnabas preached “the word of this salvation” in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia, the generality of the Jews rejected the gracious message ; but the Gentiles, under the influence of better feelings, earnestly “besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath.” (Acts xiii. 42.) So the Methodist converts, to whom the teaching of the Wesleys was the power of God unto salvation, desired to hear the same truth “the next Sabbath,” and the Sabbath after that, to the very end of life.

But where could they hear it ? Not in the parish-churches, except in some rare cases ; nor in Dissenting meeting-houses, where many of the congregations listened to an ultra-Calvinism, or to an Arianized Gospel, which acknowledged no propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and no sanctifying Spirit. Whereas the Methodist converts could be satisfied with nothing less than the Gospel in its integrity, as they had heard it from the lips of the zealous and gifted brothers, but whom they could only occasionally hear ; these faithful men extending their labours to the neglected masses of England, from the Land’s-End to the Tweed. It was clear, then, that Methodism must have a ministry of its own ; a ministry recognising the redemption of all mankind by the death of the incarnate Son of God, and offering to the vilest and the worst a salva-

tion free as the air they breathed. Christians are to live by faith, and to walk by faith. But “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God;” and faith is sustained, increased, and perfected by the same means. The Methodist converts yearned for a ministry which would stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance, setting before them, as a common privilege, the abiding witness of personal adoption, progressive and entire sanctification, and the means by which they might make their calling and election sure.

But how could such a ministry be obtained ? This question, it would appear, Mr. John Wesley, with all his sagacity and foresight, had never duly considered. He had been educated in the belief that no man is authorized to preach the Gospel but under the direct sanction of a diocesan prelate, the imposition of whose hands is essential to a valid ordination. This prejudice he was at length compelled to abandon. From among his own spiritual children, the members of his own societies, it pleased God to raise up such a ministry as was needed ; just as He raised up pastors and teachers in the apostolic churches. This unexpected phenomenon first appeared in the person of Thomas Maxfield, a member of the society connected with the Foundery in London. He was a young man of deep piety, and acceptable talents, full of holy zeal, and greatly beloved by the people. With their approval, and in the absence of the Wesleys, he began to preach, probably urged by others beyond his own first intention. The

report of this strange thing reached the ears of Mr. John Wesley, who hastened to London to check what he regarded as a sinful irregularity. His mother then resided at the Foundery ; and observing anxiety bordering upon consternation depicted in his countenance, she inquired the cause, and received the answer, “ Thomas Maxfield has turned preacher, I find ! ” She looked attentively at him, and replied, “ John, you know what my sentiments have been. You cannot suspect me of favouring readily anything of this kind. But take care what you do with respect to that young man ; for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him yourself.” He took this wise counsel, and confessed to discerning in the youthful evangelist Divine qualifications and a Divine call. Mr. Wesley’s case resembled that of St. Peter, when he was called to an account for eating with men uncircumcised, and settled the dispute by saying, “ What was I, that I could withstand God ? ” It was a happy day for England, and for the world, when Thomas Maxfield ascended the pulpit of the old Foundery, under the sanction of this wise “ mother in Israel,” to whose judgment her devoted son had always paid a respectful deference.

The case of Maxfield, though the first in order, was not peculiar. Other men, about the same time, residing in different places, without any concert or mutual understanding, were affected in the same manner, and prompted to the same course of action.

Among these were John Nelson, Thomas Richards, and Thomas Westell; and from that time one society after another furnished a succession of willing labourers, who were known as “lay preachers;” being thus distinguished from the men who were episcopally ordained. A part of these men remained at home, supporting themselves and their families by manual labour; and others placed themselves at the disposal of Mr. Wesley, who sent them into circuits, which were gradually formed as fields of evangelical toil and enterprise. Generally speaking, the men who were thus unexpectedly raised up were men of strong understanding, of established piety, of earnest zeal, of intrepid courage, and deeply affected by the ignorance and open profanity of the people by whom they were surrounded. They knew from experience that there is in the Gospel a remedy for all the evils and miseries of the world, and longed to make Christ and His salvation known. They saw everywhere “Christian savages, wild as untaught Indians.”

When they offered themselves to Mr. Wesley, to serve him as sons in the Gospel, he requested from each of them a written account of his early life, including the time and circumstances of his conversion, and the manner in which he was led to preach the Gospel of Christ. Many of the plain and unpretending narratives thus acquired, he published in the Arminian Magazine, from which they have been transferred to the ensuing volumes. To these autobiographies are added the lives of some other

men, written by their contemporaries and friends. From these authentic records it will be seen what kind of men they were whom Mr. Wesley associated with himself, as "fellow-helpers to the truth," especially in the earlier years of his career as the apostle of Methodism.

With respect to these worthies, it is observable that their religious convictions generally began in early life. Their consciences were awakened ; thoughts of death, of judgment, and of eternity, often occupied their anxious attention ; they felt that they were sinners, but knew not how to obtain either forgiveness or a clean heart. They formed resolutions of amendment again and again ; and as often violated their vows, till they were ashamed and afraid to appeal to God's mercy ; and were thus made to see and feel their utter helplessness and depravity. After many inward conflicts and misgivings, their convictions of guilt, and of the sinfulness of their nature, became more deep and agonizing ; and in the extremity of their grief they sought and found relief by faith in Christ, whose blood they believed to be shed in sacrifice for their sins. In this manner they passed from death unto life. The change was great, and was matter of personal consciousness. It was a transition from guilty fear to peace and reconciliation ; from spiritual darkness and bondage to light and liberty ; from the dread of future misery to confidence, and the joyous hope of eternal life. They were thus prepared to sympathize with the wants and miseries of sinners,

lost and undone, and qualified to unfold the means of effectual relief. They sang and taught their people to sing,

“What we have felt and seen  
With confidence we tell.”

Full of love to Christ, and of zeal for His glory, and pitying the people around them, dead in trespasses and sins, and in danger of everlasting perdition, they at first took an earnest part in prayer-meetings and other means of grace. Thoughts of preaching then occurred to their minds, or were suggested by their friends. At first these thoughts were repelled as unwelcome. The difficulty of the work, the fearful responsibility connected with it, and a painful sense of unfitness, induced them to shrink from the task, till they felt that they could not delay any longer without incurring the guilt of disobedience to the call of God.

“How shall we try those who think they are moved by the Holy Ghost to preach?” is a question proposed by Mr. Wesley; and the answer given is, “Inquire, 1. Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire and seek nothing but God? And are they holy in all manner of conversation? 2. Have they gifts (as well as grace) for the work? Have they (in some tolerable degree) a clear, sound understanding? Have they a right judgment in the things of God? Have they a just conception of salvation by faith? And has God given them any degree of utterance? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly? 3. Have they fruit? Are any

truly convinced of sin and converted to God by their preaching?—As long as these three marks concur in any one, we believe he is called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proof that he is moved thereto by the Holy Ghost."

Thus sanctioned by this venerable man, under whose direction they engaged to act, they went forth in the name of the Lord. Each of them was provided with a horse, and a pair of saddle-bags, containing his Bible, his Hymn-Book, and his wardrobe. Thus equipped, taking with them nothing but spiritual armour, every one was "valiant for the truth." The circuits, in the first instance, were of wide extent, sometimes one of them embracing even two or more counties. The journeys of these itinerant evangelists were long, their accommodations poor and uninviting, and their fare often scanty, and of the plainest kind. For some time they had no chapels in which to preach, and no societies to give them an affectionate welcome. Chapels and societies were the effects of their ministry, not accommodations provided beforehand. Their dress was plain, but respectable, though their coats were sometimes threadbare. Those of them who were at all advanced in years wore large wigs, and three-cornered hats, such as were then common among professional men; so that they were easily recognised as they passed through the towns and villages, where they were often saluted with hootings, and more formidable expressions of hostility.

They were instructed by Mr. Wesley not merely

to go to those places that wanted them, and gave them a friendly invitation, but to those who wanted them the most,—the people that were brutally ignorant and wicked. Often did they visit towns and villages of this description, unaccompanied by a single friend, taking their stand upon a horse-block, or by the side of a wall, so that no sons of Belial might get behind them and mar the service. They began by singing a hymn, which was an invitation to the people. On some occasions the congregations were quiet and respectful, though suspicious both of the preacher and his doctrine; but in not a few cases the man of God, who in pure charity had come to warn them of the fearful consequences of a life of sin, and to show them the way of salvation, met with opposition the most determined, and escaped at the hazard of his life. When St. Paul preached to the “men of Athens” upon Mars’ Hill, “some mocked,” treating the Gospel message with contempt and ridicule; others were undecided, saying, “We will hear thee again of this matter.” “Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed.” And so it was among the riots of early Methodism. While scoffers uttered their blasphemies, and men of a worldly spirit, though partially convinced of the truth, refused to hazard their reputation or their personal safety; in not a few places the hearts of others “clave” to the preacher, received the truth, requested further instruction in order to their peace and salvation, and agreed to meet together as a religious society. Their number might be small, and

the cause for a time feeble and unpromising; but the members held on their way, were faithful to Christ and to one another, and in time became an efficient centre of evangelical operation.

In places where the preachers met with the most formidable opposition; where no one offered them entertainment, or appeared to receive the truth; where clergymen stimulated the rioters, and magistrates refused to interfere; these soldiers of the cross were not disheartened. They returned again and again to the conflict, and forced the Gospel upon the attention of an unwilling people; till its adversaries, subdued by the power of truth and love, espoused the cause which they had sworn to destroy. Some of the localities in which the fiercest conflicts were held have long been among the most fruitful fields of Methodistic toil, having yielded abundant harvests of souls, fitted for the heavenly garner. The preachers themselves could not complain of the persecutions they endured; for both the Wesleys were quite willing to hazard their lives among the rudest masses of ignorant and violent men, and endured their full share of rough and cruel treatment; the gowns and bands in which they appeared affording them no protection against murderous violence.

Mr. Wesley's care for his preachers was tender and incessant. He carried on a regular correspondence with them; and his letters to them, though brief, were instructive and encouraging. He counselled them in their difficulties, and stimulated them

to higher enterprises by his own example, and by reminding them of the source whence all spiritual strength is derived. He invited them to his yearly Conference, where they saluted each other, where their spirits were refreshed, and they were girded anew with holy ardour for the work to which their lives were devoted. He did more. He provided suitable books for their use ; he advised them as to their course of reading, and the improvement of their time ; the character and length of their sermons ; their public prayers ; their personal conduct ; the care of the young ; the regulation and government of the societies ; and the means of advancing in personal religion, without which their public ministrations, he knew, would be insipid and powerless. He warned them against dilatoriness and affected delicacy, and admonished them to be examples of early rising, of punctuality, and diligence. The rules which he laid down for their use, and which are contained in the Minutes of the several Conferences, reflect the highest honour upon his judgment and fidelity, and, as a code of morals, adapted to the ministers of Christ, for practical wisdom, have never been surpassed in any age, or in any branch of the catholic church.

The consequence was, that the men who remained in connexion with him became a body of intelligent and effective preachers, and pastors of the flock ; orthodox, self-denying, laborious, and successful. They were no reeds shaken with the wind ; but men

having a fixed purpose, bent upon the fulfilment of their mission, and regardless of everything beside. They were not ambitious to deliver what some regard as finished discourses, with a courtly accent, in polished sentences, nicely prepared according to the strictest rules of art, and then committed to memory, or read from a manuscript. They were above all that. But they could from the fulness of their hearts declare the truth as it is in Jesus, in good Saxon English, which all could understand and all could feel. They could deliver the Gospel message in the open air, under the rays of a burning sun, in a shower of rain, under flakes of snow, and the arrowy sleet. They could stand before fierce mobs, "unmoved, unterrified;" with calm self-possession they could preach the word in the presence of scoffers making wry mouths before them, uttering irritating jibes, and within the sound of loud laughter. When occasion served, they could "answer a fool according to his folly," and make even the impudent ashamed. In this manner they "turned the battle to the gate;" they changed the tide of public opinion, and won for their successors that respect for religion, and for religious teachers, which now generally prevails in the land.

What these men were as preachers, the effects which attended their labours amply declare. Some of them attained to eminence in sacred scholarship, so as to be able successfully to cope with the advocates of a subtle infidelity, or of heretical opinion; and the less gifted of them could, at any time,

explain the nature and method of salvation with an accuracy, precision, and impressiveness which the most erudite theologian could not excel. "In the one thing which they profess to know," said Mr. Wesley, "they are not ignorant men. I trust there is not one of them who is not able to go through such an examination in substantial, practical, experimental divinity as few of our candidates for holy orders, even in the University, (I speak it with sorrow and shame, and in tender love,) are able to do."

Up to the time of his conversion, it would appear that Mr. Wesley was accustomed to read his sermons from the pulpit; but when he had found peace with God, "straightway the string of his tongue was loosed," so that he laid aside his papers, and preached out of the fulness of his heart, which was richly charged with Gospel truth, and all on fire with holy zeal. He studied his sermons beforehand, that he might thoroughly understand the subjects that he intended to bring before the people; but he neither committed them to memory, nor read them from a manuscript. In this respect the men whom he associated with himself in the ministry were expected to follow his example, as his mode of examining them distinctly proves. He accepted them as preachers, and not readers, of the Gospel. There may be cases in which it is proper to read a sermon in a Methodist chapel; but such cases are extremely rare; and if ever reading should become the general practice, Ichabod may be written in the front of

every pulpit: The glory of Methodist preaching is departed.\*

\* “ We do not find that St. Paul and the other apostles imposed upon themselves the troublesome servitude of penning down their discourses. And we are well assured that when the seventy and the twelve were commissioned to publish the Gospel, no directions of this nature were given in either case.

“ St. Paul gives the following pastoral instructions to Timothy :— ‘ Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee. Meditate upon these things ; give thyself wholly to them. Take heed unto thyself, and to the doctrine ; continue in them ; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.’ (1 Tim. iv. 13–16.) ‘ Preach the word ; be instant in season, out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.’ (2 Tim. iv. 2.) Now, had it ever entered into the mind of the apostle that it would be proper for pastors to compose their sermons in the manner of rhetoricians, and to deliver them as public orators, he would most probably have given some intimation of this to his disciple. In such case, he would have held out to his pupil in divinity some instruction of the following nature :—‘ O Timothy, my son, I have frequently commanded thee to labour in the work of the Lord according to my example ; but as thou art not an apostle, properly so called, and hast not received the gift of languages, I advise thee to write over thy sermons as correctly as possible. And after this, do not fail to rehearse them before a mirror, till thou art able to repeat them with freedom and grace ; so that when thou art called upon public duty, thou mayest effectually secure the approbation of thine auditors. Furthermore : when thou art about to visit any distant churches, lay up in thy portmanteau the choicest of thy sermons ; and wherever thou art, take care to have, at least, one discourse about thee, that thou mayest be prepared against any sudden emergency, and never appear unfurnished in the eyes of the people.’ The idea of such a passage in the Epistles of St. Paul, whether public or private, is too absurd to be endured.”—Fletcher’s Portrait of St. Paul.

Preaching is a means to an end ; and unless the end be attained, the sermons delivered are a failure, whatever amount of learning and eloquence they may display. The Gospel ministry was instituted by Jesus Christ ; and the end which He intended to secure by it He distinctly specified in the commission which He gave to St. Paul, when he said, “Depart ;.....for I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God ; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.” According to these impressive words, the purpose of the evangelical ministry is the illumination of the dark minds of ignorant and erring men, so that they may see their guilty, miserable, and ruined condition, with the nature and means of their recovery,—their reformation, so as to be effectually turned from the love and practice of sin, and from the dominion of the wicked one, to Christ and to God, in penitence and faith ; that, being thus turned, they may receive the forgiveness of all their past sins, and the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit ; so that, when their earthly pilgrimage shall end, they may share with all the sanctified people of God in the joys and glories of the heavenly inheritance. That these high and holy objects were accomplished by God’s blessing upon the ministry of the early Methodist preachers, is an indubitable fact. Not only were large numbers of people in every part of Great Britain and Ireland

changed as to their outward conduct, but made new creatures in Christ Jesus. Their tempers, dispositions, and habits became holy and upright, so that they were conformed to the precepts and example of the Son of God. They were good husbands and wives, good parents and children, good masters and servants, good neighbours, good citizens, good subjects; benevolent, peaceful, and just. They were contented in poverty; meek, condescending, and humble in prosperity; their families were the abodes of sanctified affection; and when they died, they died in the Lord; happy, resigned, and full of immortal hope.

Men whose preaching produced effects like these were undeniably “able ministers of the New Testament;” and their power was not confined to the pulpit. It was also put forth in the closet. They were mighty in dealing with the consciences of their hearers, because they were no less mighty in prayer. Like wrestling Jacob, they had power with God, and prevailed with Him to put forth, in connexion with their ministry, the awakening and converting energy of His Spirit.

The biographies of many of these excellent men are once more submitted to the consideration of the Methodists generally, and especially to those who have succeeded them in the ministry. From those venerated men the Methodist preachers of the present age have received, in trust for the world’s benefit, a good deposit of doctrine and discipline, which it is hoped they will maintain inviolate, and

transmit to the next generation in unimpaired efficiency. Few attempts have been made to innovate upon the theology of the Connexion since its founder went to rest ; but many and strenuous have been the efforts to subvert its discipline, by divesting the ministry of its pastoral character, but hitherto without success. But of what avail is the maintenance of discipline in principle and theory, unless it be maintained in practice ? Mr. Wesley required all his sons in the Gospel to uphold a strict discipline in every society, repressing all mere formality, negligence, and sin, as hindrances to the advancement of true spiritual religion ; and under his sanction and advice the old preachers enforced a constant attention to rule, so as to preserve a marked distinction between the church and the world,—between the society and people who satisfied themselves with a bare attendance upon the ministry of the word. Strangers were not allowed to be present at society-meetings and lovefeasts, as a matter of course, but only occasionally, and under stringent regulations ; and certainly the same line of distinction ought to be observed in respect of the Lord's supper, which is now generally administered in the Methodist chapels. Persons who trifled with the class-meeting, Mr. Wesley peremptorily directed, after due warning and admonition, to be excluded, aware that negligence in the use of this weekly means of grace betokens spiritual declension, which, when it is tolerated, usually increases, and may soon spread through a whole society. When people have lost

their spiritual enjoyments, so that they have scarcely anything to say to the glory and honour of God ; and when their love for each other has waxed cold, so that they have little pleasure in social intercourse, and still less in acts of prayer and praise ; the class-meeting is irksome, and excuses for non-attendance are eagerly sought for and invented. The old preachers, trained and advised by Mr. Wesley, thought that societies are not increased, nor is religion advanced, by tolerating negligence and formality, but by the enforcement of a salutary discipline ; not in a spirit of harshness and severity, but of loving zeal, which gives faithful and affectionate warning before the act of severance takes place. The increase of wealth has proved a snare to many a Christian professor, who loved his brethren, and the weekly meeting of his class, in the time of comparative poverty, but lost his attachment to both when wealth flowed in upon him. The Methodist societies are therefore taught in their weekly class-meeting to sing,—

“ Never let the world break in ;  
Fix a mighty gulf between.”

While the faithful men of whom we are now speaking were careful to keep the societies pure, as a means of their prosperity, they were no less faithful in watching over one another in love. No sin among them was ever tolerated. The character of every one of them underwent a strict scrutiny every year ; and any deviation from rule, and from moral purity, was visited with solemn admonition, reproof,

or expulsion, as the case might be. Every preacher was his brother's keeper.

Yet their perfect oneness of mind and heart was not the least remarkable element of their character. They were pledged to teach the same doctrine ; to observe and enforce the same system of discipline ; to aim at the same object, the advancement of true spiritual religion to the widest possible extent ; and in the year 1752 thirteen of them, including the two Wesleys, affixed their names to the following agreement :—“ That we will not listen, or willingly inquire after any ill concerning each other : That if we do hear any ill of each other, we will not be forward to believe it : That, as soon as possible, we will communicate what we hear, by speaking or writing, to the person concerned : That till we have done this we will not write a syllable or speak of it to any other person whatsoever : That neither will we mention it after we have done this to any other person : That we will not make any exception to any of these rules, unless we think ourselves absolutely obliged in conscience so to do.”

Cordial as was their affection for one another, which was perpetuated and increased by their annual Conference, when they renewed their mutual greetings, and strengthened their union by prayer, and the free discussion of questions affecting themselves and their work ; yet in the year 1753 they proposed the question, “ What can be done in order to a closer union of our helpers with each other ? ” and agreed to the following results :—“ Let them be deeply con-

vinced of the want there is of it at present, and the absolute necessity of it: Let them pray for an earnest desire of union: Let them speak freely to each other: When they meet, let them never part without prayer: Let them beware how they despise each other's gifts: Let them never speak slightingly of each other in any kind: Let them defend one another's character, in everything, to the utmost of their power: And let them labour in honour each to prefer the other before himself."

At this period the preachers were few in number; their circuits were very extensive and wide apart; they had, therefore, little intercourse with each other, and seldom met, except at their annual Conference, when their salutations were eminently cordial and affectionate. What words can express the joyous and sanctified emotion with which they would unite in singing, at the dictation of Mr. Wesley, the following stanzas, as they stood around him in the Conference?—

“ Our friendship sanctify and guide :  
Unmix'd with selfishness and pride,  
Thy glory be our single aim !  
In all our intercourse below,  
Still let us in Thy footsteps go,  
And never meet but in Thy name.  
Fix on Thyself our single eye ;  
Still let us on Thyself rely,  
For all the help that each conveys ;  
The help as from Thy hand receive ;  
And still to Thee all glory give,  
All thanks, all might, all love, all praise.

'Witnesses of the' all-cleansing blood,  
Long may we work the works of God,  
And do Thy will like those above :  
Together spread the Gospel sound,  
And scatter peace on all around,  
And joy, and happiness, and love.  
True yoke-fellows, by love compell'd  
To labour in the Gospel field,  
Our all let us delight to spend  
In gathering in Thy lambs and sheep ;  
Assured that Thou our souls wilt keep,  
Wilt keep us faithful to the end.'"

While they paid a most respectful deference to the counsels and judgment of Mr. Wesley, there was one subject on which they must have felt it extremely difficult to comply with his will ; and, indeed, it is matter of historic record, that in one or two instances they did contravene his express directions. They had the ministry of the Gospel, society-meetings, and lovefeasts, among themselves ; and they longed to have the Lord's supper in their own places of worship, and in immediate connexion with their own people : but on no account would their venerable father in the Lord yield to their wishes in this respect, still cherishing the notion that the Christian ministry possesses a *priestly* character, with which he thought his preachers were not invested. His advice was, that the preachers and the members of the societies should resort to the parish-churches to receive the memorials of redeeming mercy. But many of the officiating clergy were their bitter enemies. John Nelson was

an able and skilful workman, and earned liberal wages as a stone-mason. Yet the vicar of Birstal reported him to the magistrates as a person who had no visible means of getting his living, and was therefore a proper man to be sent into the army, as if he had been a rogue and a vagabond. A clergyman in the north of England instituted a suit in the Spiritual Court at Durham against Christopher Hopper, for the double crime of keeping a school without a licence, and of calling sinners to repentance. The Rev. Henry Wickham, one of His Majesty's justices of the peace for the West Riding of Yorkshire, committed Jonathan Reeves to York castle, his only crime being that of preaching Christ to the people. Dr. Borlase, a clerical magistrate in Cornwall, committed Thomas Westell to prison at Bodmin, and sent Thomas Maxfield into the army, on the same account. When Thomas Mitchell was holding a religious meeting, at the early hour of five o'clock on a Sunday morning, the clergyman of Wrangle raised a mob, who threw him repeatedly into a deep pond, till he was insensible, and then covered his clothes with paint. They afterwards dragged him out of bed, and conducted him half naked out of the town, and there left him, either to perish, or find his way to a people who were less inhuman than the Wrangle pastor and his servile flock. Now suppose these preachers to have gone to receive the Lord's supper at the hands of these reverend gentlemen, by whom they had been so deeply injured ; what appropriate fellowship,

the fellowship of holy love, could there be between the parties? The sight of each other must have been anything but attractive and pleasurable. They could hardly regard themselves as one with each other, as Christ is one with the Father. Yet such ought to be the feeling of Christ's disciples and friends when they surround His table, and partake of the holy supper which He has instituted as a symbol of their union. In cases of this kind, Mr. Wesley confesses that he often acted with a doubting conscience. He was environed with difficulties; but he saw that such a state of things could not be maintained in perpetuity, and therefore, towards the close of life, he ordained several of his preachers to administer the sacraments, as well as to preach the Gospel. He evidently felt that this arrangement could not be much longer delayed.

The psalmist called upon the people of his time to "mark the perfect man, and behold the upright," adding, "For the end of that man is peace;" and such was "the end" of the faithful men of whom we are now speaking. They died in faith, professing, with their latest breath, a sure trust and confidence in Christ, whose Gospel they had preached, to whom their lives were devoted, and to whom they had invited lost sinners, as the only Saviour from the wrath to come. Brief obituaries of them were drawn up by Mr. Wesley, who knew their worth, seldom extending to more than two or three expressive sentences; for he knew that their record is on high, and that a great reward awaits them at the resurrec-

tion of the just. Few tablets have been erected to their memory, and in many cases the exact place of their interment is unknown. But they need no marble monuments. The more than five thousand Methodist chapels in Great Britain alone; the still greater number of societies; the improved morals of England; the Methodist missions in the four quarters of the globe; the Methodist churches in America; the numerous and active offshoots of Methodism at home and abroad;—these constitute a more honourable monument than human hands ever erected; and these are the results of their ministry.

By the labours of the early Methodist preachers the clergy of the national church have been moved to emulation, and the country enjoys the benefit of their awakened energy. By the same means many Dissenting churches have been replenished, and supplied with efficient pastors. And shall not the memory of these men, then, be cherished by a grateful posterity? The truth is, all classes of the community owe a debt of gratitude to the early Methodist preachers, were it only for the respect which is now generally paid to religion, and to religious people. John Goodwin, John Milton, and John Locke taught the true theory of religious liberty, as the most sacred right of human nature. The Methodist preachers reduced the theory to practice, asserting it with unflinching fidelity; and by steady perseverance they succeeded in putting down all public and avowed opposition from country

squires, clerical magistrates, and lawless mobs. England is great, because she is free,—religiously, commercially, and politically free; and among her emancipators John Wesley's "helpers" are entitled to an honourable rank. They were loyal and patriotic. Did they ever quail before the intolerant spirits of their day? "No, not for an hour; that the truth of the Gospel," and freedom of religious worship, might remain with the labouring poor as their best and dearest birthright.

Methodist congregations owe a debt of gratitude to those brave and godly men. They now assemble in commodious places of worship, where they hear the Gospel in its purity, unmixed with Popery, scepticism, and heathen fate. They can pass from their homes to the house of God without disturbance, and worship without fear, which their fathers could not do; and this privilege has been secured to them by the John Nelsons of the last century.

Methodist preachers of the present time, whether old or young, are bound to think of their fathers in the Gospel with more than ordinary reverence, thankfulness, and esteem. Many, doubtless, are the inconveniences connected with an itinerant ministry; but what are they when compared with the inconveniences which were encountered by John Nelson and his brave contemporaries, who had societies, chapels, stewards, and all the appliances of Methodism, to create? When they entered upon their work, no provision was made for them, their wives, or their children; and much less for them in the time of

sickness, or of old age. Well may it be said to their successors, “Other men have laboured” and suffered; “and ye have entered into their labours,” and enjoy the benefit of their toils and privations.

The truest respect that the present race of Methodist preachers can show for their venerable fathers who now sleep in Jesus, is to imitate them in their zeal for the honour of Christ, and the salvation of souls redeemed by His blood; in their inflexible adherence to the truth; their power in prayer; their plainness and earnest simplicity in preaching; their irresistible appeals to the consciences of their hearers; their self-denial; their pastoral visitation from house to house; their sympathy with the poor and the afflicted; their mighty faith in God; their affectionate concern for the young; their enterprise in carrying the Gospel into neglected districts; their fidelity in maintaining every part of the Methodist discipline; their undying attachment and fidelity to each other; their intense earnestness in their attempts to alarm the unconverted, to bring penitent sinners into Christian liberty, and to bring all believers to the possession of the perfect love which casteth out fear. In their times a hum of sympathy with the preacher was usually heard in every regular congregation when he was engaged in prayer, and a hearty Amen followed every petition; for the power of the Lord was present to save, and was felt by the worshippers. God forbid that the time should ever come when an effective and converting ministry, lively prayer-meetings, lively class-meetings, lively

lovefeasts, and lively sacraments, should ever be spoken of and regarded only as things that are past !

Mr. Wesley executed the Deed of Declaration, giving a character and constitution to the Conference, “ for the whole body of Methodists ; in order to fix them upon such a foundation as is likely to stand as long as the sun and moon endure. That is,” says he, “ if they continue to walk by faith, and show forth their faith by their works : otherwise I pray God to root out the memorial of them from the earth.”

LONDON, *October 9th, 1865.*

THE LIVES  
OF  
EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS.



AN EXTRACT  
OF  
JOHN NELSON'S JOURNAL;  
BEING

AN ACCOUNT OF GOD'S DEALING WITH HIS SOUL FROM HIS  
YOUTH TO THE FORTY-SECOND YEAR OF HIS AGE,  
AND HIS WORKING BY HIM:

LIKEWISE THE OPPRESSIONS HE MET WITH FROM PEOPLE OF  
DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."—2 Cor. i. 3, 4.

"Lord, Thou hast led the blind by a way that he knew not."

"Where shall my wondering soul begin ?  
How shall I all to heaven aspire ?  
A slave redeem'd from death and sin,  
A brand pluck'd from eternal fire,  
How shall I equal triumphs raise,  
And sing my great Deliverer's praise ?"



## THE PREFACE.

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THE following sheets were written at divers times, for my own satisfaction. But about seventeen years ago, when I was in the Newcastle Round, I transcribed them into a book. Some of our friends saw them, and begged they might be printed; which I refused at that time, knowing my own ignorance and inability.

However, Mr. Thornton the lawyer heard of it, and desired me to let him see it; when he thought, as “the Case” had been already published, and had been a means of stirring up many to hear the word, this might be of use to comfort some that were in trouble, and advised me to put it to the press.

I declined it for the present; but Mr. Thornton showed them to several friends at Leeds, who were of the same opinion, and pressed upon me to print it immediately, which I with much reluctance agreed to: and I pray that God may make it a blessing to all that read it; and if any receive benefit therefrom, the Lord shall have the glory; for to Him alone it doth belong.

What is wrong may the Lord pardon! and that no one may be hurt by me, or anything I have written or preached, is the sincere prayer of their unworthy servant,

For Christ’s sake,

JOHN NELSON.

[*Birstal, 1767.*]



# THE JOURNAL OF MR. JOHN NELSON.

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I, JOHN NELSON, was born in the parish of Birstal, in the West Riding of the county of York, in October, 1707, and brought up a mason, as was my father before me.

When I was between nine and ten years old, I was horribly terrified with the thoughts of death and judgment, whenever I was alone. One Sunday night, as I sat on the ground by the side of my father's chair, when he was reading the twentieth chapter of the Revelation, the word came with such light and power to my soul, that it made me tremble, as if a dart were shot at my heart. I fell with my face on the floor, and wept till the place was as wet, where I lay, as if water had been poured thereon. As my father proceeded, I thought I saw everything he read about, though my eyes were shut; and the sight was so terrible, I was about to stop my ears, that I might not hear, but I durst not: as soon as I put my fingers in my ears, I pulled them back again. When he came to the eleventh verse, the words made me cringe, and my flesh seemed to creep on my bones while he read, "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat thereon, from whose face

the heavens and the earth fled away ; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the books, according to their works.” O, what a scene was opened to my mind ! It was as if I had seen the Lord Jesus Christ sitting on His throne, with the twelve Apostles below Him, and a large book open at His left hand ; and, as it were, a bar fixed about ten paces from the throne, to which the children of Adam came up ; and every one, as he approached, opened his breast, as quick as a man could open the bosom of his shirt. On one leaf of the book was written the character of the children of God ; and on the other, the character of those that should not enter into the kingdom of heaven. I thought neither the Lord nor the Apostles said anything ; but every soul, as he came up to the bar, compared his conscience with the book, and went away to his own place, either singing or else crying and howling. Those that went to the right hand were but like the stream of a small brook, but the others were like the flowing of a mighty river.

God had followed me with convictions ever since I was ten years old ; and whenever I had committed any known sin, either against God or man, I used to be so terrified afterwards that I shed many tears in private : yet, when I came to my companions, I wiped my face, and went on again in sin and folly. But, O ! the hell I found in my mind when I came to be alone again ; and what resolutions I made ! Nevertheless, when temptations came, my resolutions were as a thread of tow that had touched the fire.

When I was about sixteen, I heard a sermon in our own church, which deprived me of rest in the night; nor durst I sin as I had done before for many days. But, alas! I looked the wrong way; for I watched those that were older and more learned than myself; and what they did, I thought I might safely do: so I turned back to sin and folly. O, what evil do the old and learned do to those who are young and unlearned! When their lives are corrupt, they are certainly the most accursed beings on the earth. How many times has their example hardened my heart, and encouraged me in the broad way! Surely they are a curse to their own children and servants, as well as to their ignorant and unlearned neighbours.

When I was turned a little of sixteen, my father was taken ill, which I thought was for my wickedness: yet at that time, vile as I was, I prayed earnestly that God would spare him for the sake of my mother and the young children, and let me die in his stead; but the Lord would not regard my prayer. Three days before he died, he said to my mother, "Trouble not thyself for me; for I know that my peace is made with God, and He will provide for thee and the children." I was greatly surprised at his words, wondering how he could know his peace was made with God.

In one of my times of trouble I was in a stable, and, falling into a slumber, I dreamed I prayed that God would make me happy. But I thought, "What will make me happy?" I also dreamed that I beheld Jeremiah the Prophet standing on a large rock, at the west gate of Jerusalem. His countenance was grave, and with great authority he reproved the elders and magistrates of the city; for which they

were enraged, and, pulling him down, cast him on a dunghill where the butchers poured forth the blood of their slain beasts : and I imagined I saw them tread him under their feet ; but his countenance never changed, neither did he cease to cry out, “ Thus saith the Lord, If ye will not repent and give glory to My name, I will bring destruction on you and your city.” He seemed so composed and so happy while he lay on the dunghill, and while they were treading him under their feet, that I said in my dream, “ O God ! make me like Jeremiah ! ” and, though it was but a dream, it left as great an impression on me as if I had seen it with my eyes. And since then Thou, Lord, hast, in a small measure, given me to taste of his cup.

When I was about nineteen, I found myself in great danger of falling into scandalous sins ; and I prayed, I believe, twenty times that God would preserve me, and give me a wife, that I might live with her to His glory. He heard my prayer, and delivered me out of many dangerous temptations ; for which I praise His holy name.

The first time I ever saw my wife was at Tonge, where I was going to build the new church. I did not know who she was, nor where she came from ; but, at first sight, I said in my mind, “ That is the woman I asked of God in prayer ; ” and I fully determined, if I got married, I would live to His glory. But what are resolutions when made in our own strength ! For, though I believe God gave me the most suitable wife that I could have had, in every respect, yet, for some years after we were married, I did not live to His glory, for I loved pleasure more than God : yet many times when I had been shooting a whole day, and had got the creatures

I pursued, I was quite unhappy, and ready to break my gun in pieces, resolving never to shoot or hunt any more. At last I said to my wife, “I am determined to leave off this course of life; yet it is impossible, if I stay here: therefore, if thou art free, I will go to Sir Rowland Wynn’s, and see if I can get business there; if not, I will go somewhere else, at a distance from home.” To this she gladly consented.

On Monday morning, we parted in great love, praying one for the other. As I went from our town, I made use of Jacob’s words, which he spake to the Lord as he went to Padan-aram; and the Lord blessed me in all my journey. I found work at Newark-on-Trent, and stayed about a month. All that time the hand of God was upon me, by convicting me of my former sins; so that the sense of His wrath being justly kindled against me, made me cry to Him for mercy, often forty times in the day. Then I went to London, and got into business the day I arrived there. Here my concern for salvation increased for some time, and I continued to read and pray when I had done my work, refusing all company; and I believe, if I had had some one to show me the way, I should have closed in with the Lord in a saving manner. But I looked at men for example, and fell from my seriousness. The workmen cursed and abused me, because I would not drink with them, and spend my money as they did. I bore many insults from them, without opening my mouth to speak to them again. But when they took my tools from me, and said, if I did not drink with them, I should not work while they were drinking, that provoked me, so that I fought with several of them: then they let me alone. But that stifled my

concern for salvation, and I left off prayer and reading in a great measure. I stayed better than half a year, and had not one hour's sickness, nor did I want one day's work all that time; so that by my hand-labour I cleared, besides maintaining myself, twelve pounds fifteen shillings.

When I came home, I fell into my former course. I said to my wife, "I cannot live here." So I set off for London again, ordering her to follow me in the wagon. We both got well there, and lived in a good way, as the world calls it; that is, in peace and plenty, and love to each other.

After some time, I had a sore fit of illness: then my conscience was alarmed, and I expected to die, and perish body and soul in hell. O the distress I was in! not through fear of death, so much as of the judgment that should follow. But the Lord rebuked the fever, and restored me to perfect health.

After residing some years in London, my wife had not her health: therefore we agreed that she should take our two children and go into the country, and I would follow at a certain season; which accordingly I did. But I could not rest night or day. I said, "I must go to London again." Several asked me, "Why I would go again, since I might live at home as well as anywhere in the world?" My answer was, "I have something to learn that I have not yet learned;" but I did not know that it was the great lesson of love to God and man. When I got there, I fell to work presently, and all things prospered that I pursued. I then began to consider what I wanted to make me happy; for I was yet as a man in a barren wilderness, that could find no way out. I said to myself, "What can I desire that I have not? I enjoy as good health as any man can do; I have

as agreeable a wife as I can wish for ; I am clothed as well as I can desire ; I have, at present, more gold and silver than I have need of ; yet still I keep wandering from one part of the kingdom to another, seeking rest, and cannot find it." Then I cried out, " O that I had been a cow, or a sheep !" for I looked back to see how I had spent above thirty years ; and thought, rather than live thirty years more so, I would choose strangling. But when I considered that, after such a troublesome life, I must give an account before God of the deeds done in the body, who knew all my thoughts, words, and actions, I cried out, " O that I had never been born !" for I feared my day of grace was over, because I had made so many resolutions and broken them all. Yet I thought I would set out once more ; for I said, " Surely, God never made man to be such a riddle to himself, and to leave him so : there must be something in religion, that I am unacquainted with, to satisfy the empty mind of man ; or he is in a worse state than the beasts that perish." In all these troubles I had none to open my mind to ; so I wandered up and down in the fields, when I had done my work, meditating what course to take to save my soul.

I went from church to church, but found no ease. One minister at St. Paul's preached about man doing his duty to God and his neighbour, and when such came to lie upon a death-bed, what joy they would find in their own breast by looking back on their well-spent life. But that sermon had like to have destroyed my soul ; for I looked back, and could not see one day in all my life wherein I had not left undone something which I ought to have done, and wherein I had not done many things wrong : and I

was so far from having a well-spent life to reflect upon, that I saw, if one day well-spent would save my soul, I must be damned for ever. O, what a stab was that sermon to my wounded soul! It made me wish my mother's womb had been my grave. After that, I heard another sermon, wherein the preacher summed up all the Christian duties; but he said, "Man, since the fall, could not perfectly fulfil the will of his Maker; but God required him to do all he could, and Christ would make out the rest: but if man did not do all he could, he must unavoidably perish; for he had no right to expect any interest in the merits of Christ, if he had not fulfilled his part, and done all that lay in his power." Then I thought, "Not only I, but every soul must be damned;" for I did not believe that any who had lived to years of maturity had done all they could, and avoided all the evil they might. Therefore, I concluded that none could be saved but little children. O, what deadly physic was that sort of doctrine to my poor sin-sick soul!

I thought I would try others, and went to hear Dissenters of divers denominations; but to no purpose. I went to the Roman Catholics, but was soon surfeited with their way of worship. Then I went to the Quakers, and prayed that God would not suffer the blind to go out of the way, but join me to the people that worshipped Him in spirit and in truth; I cared not what they were called, nor what I suffered upon earth, so that my soul might be saved at last. I believe I heard them every Sunday for three months: what made me continue so long was, the expectation of some help by hearing them; for there was one, almost at my first going, that spoke something that nearly suited the state my soul was

in ; but he showed no remedy. I had now tried all but the Jews, and I thought it was to no purpose to go to them ; so I thought I would go to church, and read and pray, whether I perish or not. But I was amazed, when I came to join in the Morning Prayer, to see that I had mocked my Maker all my days, by praying for things I did not expect or desire : then I thought none could be so ignorant as I had been, nor so base, to draw near to God with their lips while their hearts were so far from Him.

In the spring Mr. Whitefield came into Moorfields, and I went to hear him. He was to me as a man who could play well on an instrument; for his preaching was pleasant to me, and I loved the man ; so that if any one offered to disturb him, I was ready to fight for him. But I did not understand him, though I might hear him twenty times for aught I know. Yet I got some hope of mercy, so that I was encouraged to pray on, and spend my leisure hours in reading the Scriptures. Sometimes, as I was reading, I thought, " If what I read is true, and if none are Christians but such as St. John and St. Paul describe to be God's people, I do not know any person that is a Christian either in town or country." I said, " If things be so, I am no more a Christian than the devil ;" and my hope of ever being one was very small. In this struggle I had but little sleep : if I slept four hours out of twenty-four, I thought it a great deal. Sometimes I started, as if I was falling into some horrible place. At other times I dreamed that I was fighting with Satan ; and when I awoke I was sweating, and as fatigued as if I had really been fighting. Yet all this time I was as capable of working, both in understanding and strength, as ever I was in my life ; and this was an

encouragement to me. In all this time I did not open my mind to any person, either by word or letter ; but I was like a wandering bird, cast out of the nest, till Mr. John Wesley came to preach his first sermon in Moorfields. O, that was a blessed morning to my soul ! As soon as he got upon the stand, he stroked back his hair, and turned his face towards where I stood, and I thought fixed his eyes upon me. His countenance struck such an awful dread upon me, before I heard him speak, that it made my heart beat like the pendulum of a clock ; and, when he did speak, I thought his whole discourse was aimed at me. When he had done, I said, "This man can tell the secrets of my heart : he hath not left me there ; for he hath showed the remedy, even the blood of Jesus." Then was my soul filled with consolation, through hope that God for Christ's sake would save me ; neither did I doubt in such a manner any more, till within twenty-four hours of the time when the Lord wrote a pardon on my heart. Though it was a little after Mid-summer that I heard him, and it was three weeks after Michaelmas before I found the true peace of God, yet I continued to hear as often as I could, without neglecting my work. I had many flashes of love under the word, when I was at private prayer, and at the table of the Lord ; but they were short, and often some sore temptations followed.

Now all my acquaintance set upon me, to persuade me not to go too far in religion, lest it should unfit me for my business, and so bring poverty and distress on my family : they said, "We wish you had never heard Mr. Wesley, for we are afraid it will be the ruin of you." I told them, "I had reason to bless God that ever he was born, for by hearing him

I was made sensible that my business in this world is to get well out of it ; and as for my trade, health, wisdom, and all things in this world, they are no blessings to me, any farther than as so many instruments to help me, by the grace of God, to work out my salvation.” Then they said they were very sorry for me, and should be glad to knock Mr. Wesley’s brains out ; for he would be the ruin of many families, if he were allowed to live, and go on as he did. Some of them said they would not hear him preach for fifty pounds. But I told them I had reason to bless God that ever I heard him, and I intended to hear him as often as I could, for I believed him to be God’s messenger ; and if I did not seek to be born again, and experience a spiritual birth, I could not enter into the kingdom of heaven, which was the doctrine he preached.

A little after Michaelmas, I had many trials again, and passion got advantage over me : then I thought it was to no purpose for me to strive any longer ; for every one endeavoured to provoke me, and I could not bear it. About this time, I was going out of the Park into Westminster, where was a soldier with his arms about him, as he was coming from guard, who began to talk to some other soldiers and a company of Welsh women. I was but a few paces from him : the tenor of his discourse was as follows :—“ You know what manner of man I was some months ago, and none of you pitied me then, though I was going headlong to the devil ; for I was a drunkard and a swearer, I was a whoremonger and a fighter, a Sabbath-breaker and a gamester ; nay, I know no sin but I was guilty of it, either in word or deed ; so that it is a miracle that my neck was not brought to the gallows, and my soul sent to hell long ago. At

that time I durst not think of death ; for I had no reason to think of aught but hell. I was therefore desperate in wickedness, and did not put a restraint on any lust or appetite ; till one day, as I was coming out of the country by Kennington Common, Mr. John Wesley was going to preach, and I thought I would hear what he had to say ; for I had heard many learned and wise men say, he was beside himself. But when he began to speak, his words made me tremble. I thought he spoke to no one but me, and I durst not look up ; for I imagined all the people were looking at me. I was ashamed to show my face, expecting God would make me a public example, either by letting the earth open and swallow me up, or by striking me dead. But before Mr. Wesley concluded his sermon, he cried out, ‘ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts ; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him ; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.’ I said, ‘ If that be true, I will turn to God to-day.’ I immediately went home, and began to read and pray, keeping out of bad company for about a fortnight, and hearing Mr. Wesley as often as I could. But my old companions missed me, and came to see what was the matter. When they found me reading the Bible, they cursed and swore, and dragged me away to an ale-house, where I sat down, and began to reason with them. But, O, how dangerous is it to encounter Satan on his own ground ! for, as I talked, I began to drink a little, and the liquor getting into my head, I quarrelled with them and fought ; and as I was going to my quarters, a lewd woman met me, and I had no power to resist her, and was again taken captive by the devil. Nevertheless, when I had slept, I was so

terrified, I thought I never durst pray any more, or expect mercy. I was determined, however, to hear Mr. Charles Wesley that night; and by his preaching, I had some hopes that my day of grace was not over. Then I began to pray again, and read the Scriptures; and one Sunday morning I called at Whitehall Chapel, where the sacrament was going to be delivered. I went to the table with trembling limbs and a heavy heart; but no sooner had I received, than I found power to believe that Jesus Christ had shed His blood for me, and that God, for His sake, had forgiven my offences. Then was my heart filled with love to God and man; and since then sin hath not had dominion over me."

These sayings of the soldier were a blessing to me; for they sank deep into my mind, and made me cry more earnestly that God would work the same change in my heart. I found my soul much refreshed at the sacrament on the Sunday after, and mightily encouraged under Mr. Wesley's sermon in the afternoon. All the week after I felt an awful sense of God resting upon me; and I had a great watchfulness over my words, and several short visits of love, having great hope that I had got complete victory over my besetting sin. But passion was yet too strong for me; for that night I fell again, and cried out immediately, "I am undone; I have lost all hopes of mercy." All the night I was as if I had been given up to Satan. In the morning, one prayed with me, but I found no answer; for my heart was as hard as a rock.

When I went back to my lodging at noon, dinner was ready; and the gentlewoman said, "Come, sit down: you have need of your dinner, for you have eaten nothing to-day." But when I looked on the

meat, I said, "Shall such a wretch as I devour the good creatures of God in the state I am now in? No; I deserve to be thrust into hell." I then went into my chamber, shut the door, and fell down on my knees, crying, "Lord, save, or I perish!" When I had prayed till I could pray no more, I got up and walked to and fro, being resolved I would neither eat nor drink till I had found the kingdom of God. I fell down to prayer again, but found no relief; got up and walked again: then tears began to flow from my eyes, like great drops of rain, and I fell on my knees a third time; but now I was as dumb as a beast, and could not put up one petition, if it would have saved my soul. I kneeled before the Lord some time, and saw myself a criminal before the Judge: then I said, "Lord, thy will be done; damn or save!" That moment Jesus Christ was as evidently set before the eye of my mind, as crucified for my sins, as if I had seen Him with my bodily eyes; and in that instant my heart was set at liberty from guilt and tormenting fear, and filled with a calm and serene peace. I could then say, without any dread or fear, "Thou art my Lord and my God." Now did I begin to sing that part of the 12th chapter of Isaiah, "O Lord, I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation." My heart was filled with love to God and every soul of man: next to my wife and children, my mother, brethren, and sisters, my greatest enemies had an interest in my prayers; and I cried, "O Lord, give me to see my desire on them: let them experience Thy redeeming love!"

In the afternoon I opened the book where it is said, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood," &c.; with which I was so affected, that I could not read for weeping. That evening, under Mr. Wesley's sermon, I could do nothing but weep, and love, and praise God, for sending His servant into the fields to show me the way of salvation. All that day I neither ate nor drank anything: for before I found peace, the hand of God was so heavy upon me, that I refused to eat; and after I had found peace, I was so filled with the manna of redeeming love, that I had no need of the bread that perisheth for that season.

At night, when I came home, the gentlewoman of the house where I had lodged a long time, told me to provide a lodging; for I must stay there no longer than that one night, since her husband was afraid some mischief would come either on them or me, with so much praying and fuss as I had made about religion. I told them I would come on Wednesday night, and pay what I owed them, and fetch my clothes away, praying that God might reward them for the kindness they had showed me: for I had had a fever in the house; and no one could show more compassion to a stranger than they did to me at that time.

On Wednesday night, according to my promise, I went to my old lodging, and paid what I owed, and got my clothes ready to bring away. But having forgotten something, I stepped back into the room to look for it. In the mean time, the man said to his wife, "Suppose John should be right, and we wrong, it will be a sad thing to turn him out of doors." When I came down, the woman stood at the door, and said, "You shall not go out of this

house to-night." I said, "What, will you neither let me go nor stay?" She replied, "My husband is not willing you should go: for he saith, if God has done anything more for you than for us, he would have you show us how we may find the same mercy." So I sat down with them, and told them of God's dealings with my soul, and prayed with them. Soon after, they both went to hear Mr. Wesley, when the woman was made a partaker of the same grace; and I hope to meet them both in heaven.

On the Saturday following, the dragon stood ready to devour my new-born soul; for my master's chief foreman came to me, saying, "John Nelson, you must look after such and such men to-morrow: there is a piece of work to be done with all speed; for the Lords of the Exchequer will be here on a particular day, by which time it must be completed." "Sir," I replied, "you have forgotten yourself: to-morrow is the Sabbath." He said he knew that as well as I; but the King's business required haste, and it was common to work on the Sunday for His Majesty, when anything was upon the finish. I told him I would not work upon the Sabbath for any man in England, except it was to quench fire, or something that required the same immediate help. He said, "Religion has made you a rebel against the King." I answered, "No, sir; it has made me a better subject than ever I was." I added, "The greatest enemies the King has are the Sabbath-breakers, swearers, drunkards, and whoremongers; for these pull down God's judgments upon both King and country." Then he said, if I would not obey him, I should lose my business. I replied, "I cannot help it: though it may be ten pounds out of my way to be turned out of my work at this time of the year, I

will not wilfully offend God ; for I had much rather want bread ; nay, I would rather see my wife and children beg their bread bare-footed to heaven, than ride in a coach to hell." He swore, if I went on awhile, I should be as mad as Whitefield ; and added, "What hast thou done, that thou needest make so much ado about salvation ? I always took thee to be as honest a man as any I have in the work, and could have trusted thee with five hundred pounds." I answered, "So you might, and not have lost one penny by me." He said, "What, hast thou killed somebody, or committed adultery, that thou art so much afraid of being damned ?" I replied, "God takes the will for the deed ; and though clear from those acts, I deserve to be damned tenfold for other crimes ; for if I sin wilfully against God, after He hath showed me such mercy, I may expect to have the hottest hell." He said, "I have a worse opinion of thee now than ever." I replied, "Master, I have the odds of you ; for I have a much worse opinion of myself, than you can have."

At night, when I went to receive my wages, he asked me if I were still obstinate. I answered, "I am determined not to break the Sabbath ; for I will run the hazard of wanting bread here, before I would run the hazard of wanting water hereafter." He said, "Wesley has made a fool of thee, and thou wilt beggar thy family." I had a glorious Sabbath the next day ; for God blessed my soul wonderfully, both under the word, and at the sacrament.

I went on Monday morning to the Exchequer, to take care of my tools, not expecting to work there any more. But God hath the hearts of all men in His own hand ; for he that was so wroth with me on the Saturday, now gave me good words, and bade

me set the men to work. From that time he behaved better for me than before; neither did he set any man to work on the Sabbath, as he had said he would. So I see it is good to obey God, and cast our care upon Him, who will order all things well; for if we refuse to join the wicked, it will be a restraint to them.

In the time of my convictions, I never let my wife know of my trouble; but now I could not eat my morsel alone. I therefore wrote to her and all my relations, to seek the same mercy that I had found. However, all I said seemed as idle tales to most of them.

Some weeks after, three gentlemen (professed Deists) fell upon me, and reasoned with me for about an hour; but the Lord put such words in my mouth, that made them say, Mr. Wesley had taught me his own lesson, and I was sunk so deep into enthusiasm that I was past recovery. Nevertheless, I see it is bad for weak believers to reason with men of corrupt principles; for after some time the enemy brought their words to my mind, and began to reason with me in this manner: "Suppose Jesus Christ should be an impostor, (as these men say he is,) thou art lost for ever." O! the distress I was in for a short time. But I made a stop, and said, "If Jesus Christ be not the Son of God, and my Saviour, I will be damned; for I will have no other." Then the cloud broke, and my soul was so filled with love, that I thought, if all the world, yea, and the devils in hell, were to set on me, they could not make me disbelieve that Jesus Christ is the very and true God, and my Redeemer.

I daily reproved all that sinned in the work where I was; so that none of them would swear in

my presence. But having no Christian friend to converse with, I kept close to God in prayer, and read the Bible at all opportunities, and heard one of the Mr. Wesleys every Sunday, and stirred up many others to hear them. And though I had many trials, I was so kept by the power of God, that nothing disturbed my peace for some time.

Once, however, as I was reading in the Bible, a gentlewoman (that lived in part of the house) brought me a book, and said, "You are often reading the Bible: if you please, I will lend you this book. My mother," she added, "took delight in reading therein." I thanked her, and began to read. For some pages it was agreeable to many things I had experienced in the time of conviction; but it was not at all correspondent to my experience, as to my conversion: pleading for sin after conversion, to keep the saints humble, and making God the author of all sin.

Then the enemy began to reason with me, that I ought not to reprove sin any more. From that time, my love began to cool both unto God and man, and my zeal for the salvation of others abated; and though the more I read the worse I was, yet I was tempted to read it through.

Before I read in that book, I did not know there was a man in the world who held such an opinion; for, in my trials, I believed every threatening in the Bible was against the disobedient, and every promise to those that turn to God. But now I was tempted to think I was safe, do whatever I would. Yet I still prayed, "Lord, let me die, rather than live to sin against Thee!"

I had never spoken to Mr. Wesley in my life, nor conversed with an experienced man about religion.

I longed to find one to talk with ; but I sought in vain, for I could find none.

One time, as I was reasoning about what I had read, I opened the Bible on these words, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not." I then prayed, "O Lord, what I know not do Thou teach me!" And I thought I would wait upon the Lord in fasting and prayer till He revealed His will to me ; and I did, for several weeks, fast from Thursday night to eight o'clock on Saturday morning, spending the time I was off my work either upon my knees at prayer, or in searching the Scriptures ; and before I opened my Bible, I prayed that God would open my understanding to comprehend what I read. I think the first scripture that was applied to me was, "As ye have received the Lord Jesus, so walk in Him." Then I remembered what state my soul was in when I first received His Spirit in my heart ; that it was filled with love to every soul, and I could pray for all my enemies as well as myself ; but this book had turned me out of that blessed state, by setting me to reason about opinions that I never heard of in my life till several weeks after I had received the love of Christ : therefore I said in my mind, "Let it be right or wrong, it is not necessary for salvation. I found the Lord to be my Saviour before I knew there was a man in the world of that opinion ; and before I read it, I loved both God and man better than I have done since, and was more useful in reproving and doing good than I am now." I then prayed that God would give me that simplicity and godly sincerity that I walked in when He first revealed Christ in my heart. And He answered me in a wonderful manner ; so that my tongue was loosed to

reprove, and my heart again enlarged to pray for every soul of man.

I now went on my way rejoicing for some days, and had so much of the Lord all the day long, that my soul seemed to breathe its life in God as naturally as my body breathed life in the common air. But, one day, I reproved a man for swearing ; when he told me he was predestined to it, and did not trouble himself about it at all : for if he were one of the elect, he should be saved ; but if not, all he could do would not alter God's decree : so that all I said to him seemed to take no more hold on him than if I had thrown a leather ball against a rock. I thought God was very good to me, who kept me ignorant of these opinions till I knew my part in the all-atoning blood ; for I feared if I had heard such things in the time of my distress, they would have been the destruction of my body and soul. Yet I durst not say anything against that opinion, but wished I had some experienced man to converse with about it ; for I was brought into heaviness again by reasoning : but, alas ! not one could I find.

I still continued to wait on the Lord, with fasting and prayer. One fast-day, being greatly perplexed, I opened the book on these words, "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner." Then my heart was set at liberty ; and I cried out, "Glory be to Thee, O Lord ; for Thou hast given me Thy word and Thy Spirit in my heart, to bear witness that Thou art no respecter of persons."

Now I found such a desire for the salvation of souls, that I hired one of the men to go and hear Mr. Wesley preach ; who has since told me it was the best thing, both for him and his wife, that ever man did for them.

All that hard winter, I still fasted from Thursday night to Saturday morning ; and gave away the meat that I should have eaten to the poor, spending my time in praying and reading the Scriptures.

About this time several came to see me, who, finding me at work, looked at each other like men amazed, and said they were glad to see me so well. I told them I had not had one day's sickness for six months. They said, "A man that worketh at the Treasury with you told us you had been hearing that false prophet, Wesley, and he had made you go mad, and incapable of working." "Well," said I, "here is my master : he can testify that I have not lost one day's work this half-year ; nor was I ever better able to do any work in all my life. But I have heard Mr. Wesley, and have reason to bless God for it ; for he is God's messenger for my good." Some words that I spoke seemed to stick in them ; so that I hope Satan will lose ground by that false and ill-grounded report.

The enemy, however, now came upon me with other temptations, and prepared such instruments to destroy my soul that I feared I should be overcome, and perish at last ; for wherever I went the snare was laid for me, and my soul was so harassed with my wicked dreams, that I have often awaked and found my pillow wet with tears, after thinking that the enemy would reason with me about some sin I had committed in my dream. But this drove me more to prayer, and showed me my corrupt nature in such a light that I abhorred myself, and thought the Lord never undertook to save one more like the devil in nature than I was ; and it was often impressed on my mind that if I held out to the end, I should have great reason to sing louder in the Redeemer's praise than any other soul in heaven.

I would fain have known whether any one that had the grace of God in him was tempted day and night as I was ; but, my business being altogether at the court-end of the town, I had no one to open my mind to. Then I took up the Bible, and, after praying, happened on these words of St. James : “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation : for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of glory, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.”

One night, after a day of fasting, I dreamed that I was in Yorkshire, in my working-clothes, going home ; and, as I went by Paul Champion’s, I heard a mighty cry, as of a multitude of people in distress ; and I saw, in my dream, the large court behind John Rhodes’s as full of people as they could stand by one another. All on a sudden, they began to scream and tumble one over another. I asked what was the matter ; and they told me Satan was let loose among them, and begged of me to get out of the way, for he was coming. But I said, “By the grace of God, I will not turn to the right hand or to the left for him.” Then I thought I saw him in the shape of a red bull, running through the people, as a beast runs through the standing corn ; yet he did not offer to gore any of them, but made directly at me, as if he would run his horns into my heart. Then I cried out, “Lord, help me !” and immediately caught him by the horns, and twisted him on his back, setting my right foot on his neck, in the presence of a thousand people ; and I bade them cry to Jesus, assuring them that what they had seen me do He would enable them to do. When I awoke, I was in a sweat, and my body was as much fatigued as if I had been at hard labour ; but my soul was filled with joy.

A little after this, as I was reading the Scriptures, a letter came to me. I saw it was not from my wife : then I said, "I fear here is bad news." Upon opening it, I found my daughter was dead, whom I formerly idolized ; my son was so ill that his life was despaired of ; my wife had fallen from a horse, and was lamed ; my father-in-law was dead, and my mother was sick. It then came to my mind that, when I was at the sacrament, I had made a free-will offering to the Lord of my body and soul, wife and children, and all that was near and dear to me ; but I thought, "How shall I bear it, now the Lord has taken them at my hand ?" I went to prayer, and found my heart wholly resigned to the will of God. Then it came to me, "Let the dead bury their dead ; but follow thou Me." I began to read again, and the people of the house where I was scolded me, because I did not weep, wring my hands, and stamp as they did, at the loss of a child, saying I was a hard-hearted father. I replied, "I cannot tell how to choose what is best ; but God cannot err."

The May following, I was ordered to take some men, and go to Lord Onslow's, near Guildford, in Surrey, to do a piece of work that would last all summer. This was heavy tidings ; for I thought I was but weak in faith, and should be deprived of hearing Mr. Wesley, and have no one to converse with. I desired to be excused ; but all in vain. I believe I should have left my master, but I thought it would be unjust to leave him in such a busy time, when he had kept me employed all that hard winter. However, it made me cry to the Lord to go with me, and protect me from both my inward and outward enemies. And He was gracious, enabling me to reprove all that sinned in my presence ; so that a

young gentleman said to some of the men, "Of what religion is your foreman? Is he a Baptist, or is he a Quaker?" They replied, "No, sir; he is of the Church of England." He said, "He may tell you so, but he is no Churchman; for we can hardly speak at table, but he is reproving us; and if he say but one word, we cannot persuade him to drink a glass more." I overheard him, though he did not see me; and said, "Sir, you give a bad character of the Church of England, if you say a man cannot be a Churchman that reproves others for cursing and swearing, and refuses to drink to excess."

One day, the Speaker of the House of Commons came to visit my lord; and taking a view of the work, he asked me many questions about it, which I answered as well as I could. He said, "This is a fine house, and a fine estate of land about it! But what will it signify? For a piece of land, six feet long and three broad, will fit me shortly." He then fetched a deep sigh, went away, and walked alone among the trees.

While I was at Guildford I had several conversations with some Baptists. But, alas! their religion lay in notions. I found no true experience amongst them. I reasoned with them about the necessity of the new birth; and contended with many other sects that all religion without the life of Christ manifested in us would profit us nothing at last.

I heard that some, who were called serious people, said I was a dangerous man to converse with; and others shunned my company after I had talked with them. Then I thought I would leave off reproving and reasoning, for I made myself to be abhorred. I cried out, "Lord, show me what is Thy will in the matter!" and then laid me down in great heaviness.

That night I dreamed I saw a tall young person in a white vesture, whose face shone like the sun, standing at the foot of my bed, who said unto me, "Arise, and praise the Lord." I thought a great light shone round my bed, by which I saw myself defiled from the top of my head to the sole of my foot; and answered, "How can such an unclean creature show forth the praises of God?" Then I thought he showed me a river as clear as crystal, with fine green grass growing at the bottom thereof, in which he bade me wash and be clean. I thought I went at his bidding, and as soon as my feet were dipped in the water, the filth dropped from my whole body; nevertheless, the water was not defiled by it, at which I was surprised. When I came to the middle of the river, it was deeper than I was high, and I knew I could not swim; yet my soul was so filled with the sense of God's love, that my head was kept above water. I then thought I spread my hands, like a man who is going to swim, and as I laboured to swim I rose up out of the water, and was carried, as on the wings of an eagle, above the clouds, and cried, "Hosanna to the King of heaven!" And, though asleep, I sang so loud that I awoke the people of the house. I now resolved to reprove again, and seemed to do it with more authority than before; and my words began to stick to some, and cause them to reform their lives.

About Michaelmas, I came back to London: and several that used to attend Mr. Wesley's preaching at Kennington Common and Moorfields, who had also joined with him in the Foundery, came to see me; at which I was surprised, having no correspondence with them, any further than speaking one to another as we went from place to place to hear him preach.

At their first coming, I thought it was the thing I longed for; often wishing that I had some Christian friends to converse with. They said they heard I was come to town, and the love they bore me made them come to see me. I answered, "I thank you: pray how does my good friend Mr. Wesley do?" They replied, "We do not know: poor dear man, he is wandering in the dark; but we hope our Saviour will open his eyes, and let him see that he is a blind leader of the blind." Their words were as a sword running through my liver, and made me cry out, "Lord, have mercy upon me! What is the matter with him?" They answered, "Poor dear man, he is under the law, and does not know the privilege of the Gospel himself; therefore he preaches law and works." I said, "Then he is strangely altered since I left London; for when I was in town, he preached repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus; teaching the necessity of both as clearly from Scripture as any man in England could, and showing the fruits of faith as plainly as it is possible for any man to do; and I found his word to be more blessed to me than any man's I ever heard in my life." They told me that "I had never heard the Gospel in my life, except I had heard the Brethren that preached in Fetter-Lane; for they were the men that were come to lead the people into true stillness." I said, "What do you mean by true stillness?" They replied, "It is to cease from our own works, such as fasting and prayer, reading the Bible, and running to church and sacrament; and wholly to rely on the blood and wounds of the Lamb." I said, "I do not know that I ever heard either of the Mr. Wesleys bid any man trust in prayer, or reading, or going to sacrament, or giving of alms, for salvation, either in

whole or in part." But they answered, "Why doth he teach men to do these things, if they are not to be saved by them?" I replied, "If I understand Mr. Wesley rightly, he only speaks of them as Christ and His apostles speak of them; that is, to wait in them as a beggar waits for a morsel at a man's door. I never spoke to Mr. Wesley in my life; therefore, I know not what he believes, any farther than by his preaching." They told me, that most of the people who had followed him before I left London, had forsaken him, and were become happy sinners now; and wished I would go and hear the Brethren; for Mr. Wesley was only a John Baptist, to go before and prepare them for the Brethren to build up: adding, "If you go to hear him, he will bring you into bondage; and you will never be happy till you are free from the law: for we were never happy till we left him, and went to hear Mr. Molther; and till then we were under the law." I replied, "Pray were you not converted before you left Mr. Wesley?" They answered, "Yes, we had gone through a great deal of trouble, and found great peace and joy, knowing our sins were forgiven; but when we heard Mr. Molther, we found we were yet under the law: for he showed the privilege of the Gospel, and we found we had not such a privilege; for if we broke the law in any little matter, we were quite unhappy; or if we neglected to pray, or missed a sermon or two, then we were uneasy; but now we are happy, for the Lamb hath done all for us." I said, "Though He hath done His part, yet the apostle teaches us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; and we are bidden to pray always, and search the Scriptures; and St. Paul fasted often, and kept his

body in subjection, lest, when he had preached to others, himself should be a castaway. But you are become wiser than the apostle, and have got another gospel: though he said, if he or an angel from heaven should preach another gospel, let him be accursed. I am afraid you are deceived, and are seeking a happiness that is separated from holiness: if so, you are led away by a deceiving spirit; for if you commit sin, and break the righteous law of God, and still continue happy, without any conviction that God is offended with you, your consciences are seared as with a hot iron." They answered, " You are a poor unhappy man, and as blind as Mr. Wesley;" and so left me, without either praying with me or for me.

When I came to reason about what they had said, and to compare it with the words of our Lord and His apostles, I saw their scheme of salvation was as contrary to that of Christ, as darkness is to light. This drove me to prayer, and made me double my diligence in reading the Bible.

In a few days after, two more, that were a little acquainted with me, came to see me. I asked them how Mr. Wesley was. They said, they did not know, for they did not hear him now. I asked, " Why do you not?" They replied, " He denieth the faith of the Gospel." I said, " I am sorry for it; but I hope you are only wrong informed." They answered, " We have heard ourselves." I replied, " What do you call the faith of the Gospel?" They said, " Predestination and election." I told them, I thought it was not the faith of the Gospel; but it was rather for every one to believe in his heart, that he is a fallen spirit, by nature a child of wrath, and by practice an heir of hell; and that the eternal

Son of God out of love to me, a poor helpless and hell-deserving creature, laid His glory by, and for my sake fulfilled all righteousness, at last giving His body for my body and His soul for my soul; and that God, for the sake of His obedience and blood-shedding, hath forgiven all my sins. I said, "According to the light I have, this is the faith of the Gospel; and he that is a partaker of this faith hath received the Spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind; power to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live a godly, righteous, and sober life." I added, "Pray, under whom were you converted?" They both replied, "Under Mr. Charles Wesley." "Did he then preach what you now call the Gospel?" They replied, "No." "Did God then reveal that to you to be the faith of the Gospel, as soon as He wrote pardon on your hearts?" They said, "No: when we were in our first love, we believed as Mr. Wesley believes; but now we see better, and hope his eyes will be opened shortly." I said, "I fear yours are become dim: for I think you are more light and unwatchful than you used to be; and you own you have lost your first love. O, remember, Christ bids you repent and do your first works, or He will remove your candlestick!" But they told me, "Do what we will, we cannot finally fall." I answered, that as far as I could learn by their words and behaviour they were already fallen: and I wished they did not make a Christ of their opinions; for though, I allow, many good men hold these opinions; yet I judge, all that were converted under the two Mr. Wesleys were at first filled with love to every man, and a perfect hatred to all sin, and were inspired with a zeal for God's glory, and the welfare of all mankind.—"Was not this your state once?"

They owned it was, till they heard Mr. Sawyers; and it was by him they saw into the electing love of God. I replied, "I fear you have sinned against light and love; and, instead of going back to the Lord, by true repentance, and seeking a fresh pardon in the blood of Christ, you have been gadding about to seek new opinions: you have gone out of the highway of holiness, and have now got into the devil's pinfold: you are not seeking to perfect holiness in the fear of God, but are resting in opinions, that give you liberty to live after the flesh: and if you continue so to live, you are safe in his hold, out of which you will be brought to the slaughter." They told me I was as stupid as Mr. Wesley. I replied, Satan had preached that doctrine to me before they did; and God had armed me against both him and them. Then they left me in my blind estate, as they called it; and I prayed that I might never turn out of the way that God had called me into.

On Sunday, I had the opportunity of hearing Mr. John Wesley once more; and his word was precious food to my soul. Then I blessed the Lord, that had still kept His servant, as an iron pillar, in the same spirit in which I left him. But I observed a great part of the congregation were strangers to me; for many of the old hearers were gone, and others come in. When I found that some had turned to the Germans, and some to the Predestinarians, I said, "O Lord, I will praise Thee; for Thou doest all things well. Thou by Thy Providence didst send me out of town when the enemy was rending Thy flock to pieces, and thereby Thy servant hath escaped the snare."

A few weeks after, I was at St. Paul's, where Mr,

John Wesley also was ; and I contrived to walk with him after sacrament : for I had often wished I could speak with him, therefore I seized this opportunity ; so we continued in discourse all the way from St. Paul's to the farther end of Upper Moorfields ; and it was a blessed conference to me. When we parted, he took hold of my hand, and, looking me full in the face, bade me take care I did not quench the Spirit. I had not such an opportunity again while I stayed in London, either with him or his brother ; but I kept close to God by fasting and prayer ; and the Lord helped me through many trials.

One night, after I had been delivered from grievous temptations, my soul was filled with such a sense of God's love, as made me weep before Him. In the night I dreamed I was in Yorkshire, going from Gomersal Hill-Top to Cleck-Heaton ; and about the middle of the lane I thought I saw Satan coming to meet me in the shape of a tall, black man, and the hair of his head like snakes : but I thought I was not afraid at all ; and I said, "Stand by me, O Lord ; and I will not turn to the right hand or to the left." Yet I thought I would not stand to fight with him as I used to do. When he came within about five paces of me, he stood : but I went on, ripped open my clothes, and showed him my naked breast, saying, "See, here is the blood of Christ." Then I thought he fled from me as fast as a hare could run.

I was still attacked by the Moravians on one side, and the Predestinarians on the other ; but the Lord enabled me to stop their mouths, and to show them that they had lost their first love. Yet they seemed to be hardened and past all conviction. And the

more I read the Scriptures, the more I was confirmed that they were fallen into carnal security; which made me pray more earnestly that God would preserve me from all the snares of the devil.

About ten days before Christmas, I went to St. Paul's; and while I was at the communion-table, I felt such an awful sense of God resting upon me, that my heart was like melting wax before Him; and all my prayer was, "Thy will be done! Thy will be done!" I was so dissolved into tears of love, that I could scarce take the bread; and after I had received, it was impressed on my mind, "I must go into Yorkshire directly." But I said in myself, "If I do, it will be ten pounds out of my way." I had determined to go at May-day; but I thought, to stay for the sake of money would be wrong, when I believed it was the will of God I should go. So I packed up my clothes, and set out. I found much of the Lord's presence all the way I went; but I had no more thought of preaching than I had of eating fire.

When I got home, I was greatly disappointed; for I expected to find many of my relations converted, as I understood they attended Mr. Ingham's preaching. But when I explained to them what it was to be converted, they said they never heard of such a thing in their lives. I told them, I knew those things by happy experience. But they begged I would not tell any one that my sins were forgiven; for no one would believe me; and they should be ashamed to show their faces in the street. I answered, "I shall not be ashamed to tell what God has done for my soul, if I could speak loud enough for all the men in the world to hear me at once." My mother said, "Your head is turned." I replied, "Yes, and my heart too, I thank the Lord." My wife told me,

she was ashamed to put her head out of doors ; for every one was talking about me, and upbraiding her with my sayings ; and she wished I had stayed in London ; for she could not live with me, if I went on as I did : for which reason, she desired that I would leave off abusing my neighbours, or go back to London. I answered, I did not care what all the people could say ; for I was determined to reprove any one that sinned in my presence. Then she cried, and said, I did not love her so well as I used to do. I replied, "Yes, I love thee better than ever I did in my life : and thou hast no reason to dispute my love ; for I have been careful to provide for thee, whether I was at home or abroad : and we have been happy in each other upwards of twelve years ; but if thou wilt seek for redemption in the blood of Christ, we shall be ten times happier than ever." She then said, "Nay, my happiness with thee is over ; for, according to thy words, I am a child of the devil, and thou a child of God." Then she wept, and said, "I cannot live with thee." I said, "Why so ? Thou shalt never want while I am able, by honest endeavours, to provide for thee. Nay," I continued, "if thou wilt not go to heaven with me, I will do the best I can for thee ; only I will not go to hell with thee for company. But I believe God will hear my prayer, and convert thy soul, and make thee a blessed companion for me in the way to heaven." After this, my wife began to be concerned about the salvation of her soul.

A few days after I had got home, David Taylor came to preach in our town, in Mr. Ingham's Society, when I went to hear him : and a dry morsel his sermon was. Several that were acquainted with him followed me, and wanted to know how I liked

the discourse. I was backward to tell them ; but they pressed hard on me, and said, " Do you not think he is as good a preacher as Mr. Wesley ? " I said, " There is no comparison between his preaching and Mr. Wesley's : he has not stayed long enough in the large room at Jerusalem." After they had been gone some time, they came again to ask what I meant. I said, " He is not endued with power from on high." They went and related to him what I said ; and he told me since, that, if I had been present, he could have stabbed me ; yet he could not rest till he went to hear Mr. Wesley in London. Then he found what was said was true ; and he came down to Sheffield and into Derbyshire, preaching what he called Wesley's doctrine, and awakened and converted many scores of people, till the Germans got to him, and made him deny the law of God : then he became as salt without savour.

I went afterwards to a meeting of Mr. Ingham's, where one read in an old book for nearly an hour ; then sung a hymn, and read a form of prayer. I told them that way would never convert sinners, and began to relate some of my experience ; and several were struck with convictions while I was speaking, some of whom became witnesses of the same grace that God showed me.

In a little time all I said was noised abroad ; and people of all denominations came to dispute with me. As soon as I came home from work, my house was filled with people, which made my wife uneasy ; for she could do no work, and did not yet believe what I said was true. Generally, when I came in and sat down, some one would ask me a question, and others would begin to dispute with me, while others stood by to hear.

When any began to cavil, I commonly asked, "What church do you belong to?" and if they said, the Church of England, then I replied, "Do you know your sins forgiven?" Several said, "No, nor ever expect to know it in this world." Then I replied, "You are no members of the Church of England, if you have not a full trust and confidence, that God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Read the Homilies of the Church, and you will see what I say is true." I used to have the Bible and Common Prayer Book by me; and I showed them the Articles of the Church, saying, "You deny inspiration; and the Church you profess to belong to, says, 'Before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of His Spirit, no good works can be done.' So, if the Church speak rightly, you must be inspired by the Spirit of Christ, to enable you to bring forth good fruit, or you must be the fuel of hell. And how dare you to pray to have your thoughts cleansed by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, if you do not believe there is any such thing to be attained in this world? O! do not mock God any more, by asking for things with your mouths when you do not believe in your hearts He will grant them." But one said, "I have been with a very learned clergyman of a neighbouring church; and he told me, there was no such thing to be attained in this life." I answered, "I think you have mistaken him; for I was at that church last Sunday, and heard him declare all I have said to you." He said, "I was there, and heard no such thing mentioned." I replied, "No! did you not hear him affirm, 'that God had given power and commandment to His ministers, to declare and pronounce to His people, being penitent, the absolution of their sins?' And he farther declared, 'that God

pardoneth and absolveth all those that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe His Gospel.' Therefore, it is plain, you never did repent, nor unfeignedly believe His Gospel, if God has not pardoned and absolved you from your sins. Else both he and all that are in priest's orders in England are false witnesses before God and man. And how many times have you besought God to 'give you true repentance; and to forgive you all your sins, negligences, and ignorances; and to endue you with the grace of His Holy Spirit, that you might amend your lives according to His holy word?' And now you say, there is no such thing! Though you may remember Mr. R. said, 'Let us beseech God to grant us true repentance, and His Holy Spirit, that those things may please Him which we do at this present, and that the rest of our lives may be pure and holy.'"

By these discourses, many were pricked to the heart, and durst not offer the sacrifice of fools any more: they prayed in good earnest that God would pardon their sins, and answer them to the joy of their hearts.

When any said, they were of the Church of Scotland, I asked them, if they did not know their sins forgiven. They told me, that they did not; nay, farther, they thought it presumption for any one to pretend to know it, or to expect such high attainments as I spoke of; and they told me I was a Papist, or I would not talk as I did. I answered, "I know not what you think of me; but I think you neither know what a Papist nor Presbyterian is; for your own mouths declare, that you are no members of the Church of Scotland. That Church disowns you; for none are allowed members thereof, but those that are effectually called. And they that

are effectually called do in this life partake of justification, adoption, and sanctification. And the same Church saith, that justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins; that adoption is an act of God's free grace, by which we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of God's sons; and that sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the inner man, after the whole image of God; and all that are so effectually called, do enjoy an assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And I pray you, what have I said more? By your talking, you are the sons of Rome, and enemies to the true Protestant religion. Let me beg you to go home, and read the Assembly's Catechism, and come and talk with me again, after you have read it." Several of them did so; and came with tears in their eyes; and are now witnesses that God has power on earth to forgive sins.

I found it always in my mind not to let any depart that came to dispute with me, till we had prayed together. The first that was brought to experience the redeeming love of Christ was my own brother; and in a few days six of my neighbours.

My wife also was thoroughly convinced that she must experience the same work of grace, or perish. During the time of her convictions she was seized with a pleurisy, and her case was thought to be very dangerous. Then I besought the Lord for her with fasting and prayer. The next day she was worse; and the distress of her soul increased the disorder of her body, so that she seemed as if she could not subsist long. That night my house was filled with people, and none of them offered to dispute with me. I read several portions of Scripture to them, some

out of the Old, some out of the New Testament, and compared one with another, and prayed with them. As I was in prayer, my wife, being in the parlour, and within hearing, fainted, and was as if she had just sunk into the gulf of God's judgments. Immediately she thought she felt the Lord Jesus catch her as she was falling, and lay His hand on her side, where the disorder was, and bade her be of good comfort; telling her, "Thy sins are forgiven." When I came to the bed-side, she was just come to herself, and said, "My dear, the Lord has healed me both in body and soul! I will get up and praise His holy name;" which she accordingly did. From that hour her fever ceased, and her heart was filled with peace and love.

Now God had raised up eight witnesses to Himself in this place; and the enemies began to report, that I had forgiven such and such their sins, which made many come and talk with me.

One night I went to Adwalton, to hear Mr. Ingham preach. As soon as I got into the house, he called me into the parlour, and desired the company that was with him to go out, for he had something to say to me. When they went out, he rose up, barred the door, then sat down by me, and asked me how my wife did. When I had told him, he said, "Do you know your own heart, think you?" I answered, "Not rightly; but I know Jesus Christ; and He knows and hath taken possession of it; and though it be deceitful, yet He can subdue it to Himself; and I trust He will." He said, "Have you not deceived yourself with thinking that your sins are forgiven, and that you are in a state of grace? I was three years seeking, before I found Him." I replied, "Suppose you were, do you confine

God to be three years in converting every soul, because you were so long? God is as able to convert a soul in three days now, as He was to convert St. Paul 1700 years ago."—I then began to tell him what I had seen at London under Mr. Wesley's preaching. He said, he pitied poor Mr. Wesley, for he was ignorant of his own state; and he spoke as if he believed Mr. Wesley to be an unconverted man; at which words my corrupt nature began to stir. But it came to my mind, "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God;" and I lifted up my heart to the Lord, and my mind was calmed in a moment. He said, "You ought not to tell people that they may know their sins forgiven; for the world cannot bear it; and if such a thing were preached, it would raise persecution." I replied, "Let them quake that fear. By the grace of God, I love every man, but fear no man; and I will tell all I can, that there is such a prize to run for. If I hide it, mischief will come upon me. There is a famine in the land; and I see myself in the case of the lepers that were at the gate of Samaria, who found provision in the enemies' camp, and, when they had eaten and drunk, and loaded themselves, said, 'We do not well; for this is a day of glad tidings: let us go and make it known to the king's household.' When I found God's wrath removed for the sake of His dear Son, I saw provision enough for my poor fainting soul, and for all the world, if they would come for it. I believe it is a sin not to declare to the children of men what God has done for my soul, that they may seek for the same mercy." He told me, I had nothing to do with the Old Testament, or to make comparisons from anything that was in it. I answered, "I have as much to

do with it as with the New Testament." He replied, "I would not have you speak any more to the people, till you are better acquainted with your own heart." I told him, I would not in his Societies, unless I was desired; but what I did in my own house, or in any other person's that requested me, he had no business with. I added, "I do not belong to you; and though I have heard you several times, it is no benefit to me; for I have experienced more of the grace of God than ever I heard you preach of it, or any one since I left London."

Soon after Mr. Ingham came out and began to preach; when I was greatly surprised; for what he had forbidden me to do, he did directly: he told them that night, they must know their sins forgiven in this world, or go to hell, if all the devils in hell could pull them in.

I still went on at my own house as before, every night; and in about three weeks my eight were increased to seventeen.

As I was explaining Rom. vii., my mother fell into deep convictions, and cried, "I am a lost sinner." I went to prayer with her; and she neither ate pleasant bread, nor took natural rest, till she found redemption through the blood of Christ. Then she came to me with tears of joy, and said, "Thank God on my behalf; for He hath dealt bountifully with me. When thou wast a lad, I had more trouble with thee than any other child; but God has more than rewarded me for all my trouble, in that He has raised thee up to show me the way of salvation." She lived about six months after, and then died in the triumph of faith. She was the first ripe fruit that God gave me of my labour.

Soon after, another of my brothers, my aunt, and

two cousins, were converted ; though still I did not attempt to preach, but read some part of the Scripture, then exhorted them to observe what they had heard, and so ended with prayer. And God wrought in a wonderful manner ; for six or seven were converted in a week, for several weeks together. All this time I had no one to converse with, except such as wanted to turn me out of the narrow path ; neither had I any correspondence with Mr. Wesley ; but still I was as one set to labour in a field alone.

After some time, Peter Bohler came into Yorkshire, and laboured while Mr. Ingham went to London. I heard him, and he pleased me well ; for at that time he spake to the purpose. When he had done, I went and took him by the hand, and thanked him for his wholesome exhortation. He asked me my name. I told him. He saluted me, and said, “ My brother, I am glad to see you ; for I have just now been talking with some that told me they were converted by you ; and I like them better than any souls I have conversed with since I came into Yorkshire.” And he added, “ I will call to see you when I come to Birstal.” So he did, and stayed with me all night, and encouraged me to speak on, and spare none. He added, “ The Lord hath called you to labour in His vineyard ; and if you do not labour, He will call you to judgment for it.” I told him, that Mr. Ingram had forbidden me ; but he said, “ He will be back from London in three weeks, then I will speak to him ; for I know that God is with you ; and I will call on you, whenever I come through this town.” So he did at that season ; and his conversation was profitable to me ; for he then spoke as contrary to the Moravians who are in London as black is to white. God blessed his word ;

for many were awakened by him at his first coming into Yorkshire.

When Mr. Ingham returned from London, he came to brother Mitchell's in our town, and sent for me. He saluted me as soon as I came in, and desired me to sit down by him, and said, "John, I believe God has called you to speak His word; for I have spoken with several since I came back from London, who, I believe, have received grace since I went; and I see God is working in a shorter manner than He did with us at the beginning; and I should be sorry to hinder any one from doing good." He said also to the brethren and sisters, "Before you all, I give John leave to exhort in all my Societies." He then took me by the hand, saying, "John, God hath given you great honour, in that He hath made use of you to call sinners to the blood of our Saviour; and I desire you to exhort in all my Societies as often as you can."

I did so; and many were struck to the heart, and were made to cry out, "Lord, save, or we perish!" So that nine or ten in a week were brought to experience the love of Jesus. Those that were of the Church of England, I exhorted to keep close to the Church and sacrament; and the Dissenters, to keep to their own meetings, and to let their light shine before those of their own community. But soon after, I learned that Mr. Ingham advised the contrary, and several began to stay at home on the Sabbath; which made me very uneasy.

One night I had been disputing with several of them, about their neglecting the ordinances, and about their speaking against inward holiness, as we were going to hear Peter Bohler, at Charles Summerscales's. When he got up, he took two

verses of the tenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel : “ Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess before My Father which is in heaven : but whosoever shall deny Me before men, him also will I deny before My Father which is in heaven.” I thought if he had heard all that I had said, and had laboured to justify every word I had spoken, he could not have preached more to the purpose : for he said, to confess Jesus was to live to Him, and to honour Him with body, soul, and substance ; and to deny Him, was to live to ourselves, by refusing to do what He commanded, because it was not agreeable to nature, and did not make for our temporal interest. He added, “ If any one did so much as to keep the tip of his little finger to commit sin with, it would damn both his body and soul in hell.”

My adversaries now hung down their heads ; and complaint was made to Mr. Telchig, that Mr. Bohler preached Wesley's doctrine ; and he was sent to London soon after. He came back in three weeks' time ; but such a change for the worse did I never see in mortal man ! for he that professed to love me as his own soul, durst not come near the door of my house, nor converse with me at all ; and his word was as chaff, in comparison of what it used to be.

Then I saw what was coming on me, and the people God had given me. This made me weep in secret places before the Lord ; and I desired to die, rather than live to see the children devoured by these boars out of the German wood. I saw many deluded by their soft words and fair speeches ; and I thought I would exhort no more ; for I was begetting children, and they slew them among the smooth stones of the brook ; and they had better never have

known the way of salvation, than, after knowing it, be turned thereout. But Samuel Mitchell urged me to speak, and not to spare. Yet I found great backwardness; and often said, when I went out of my door, "Lord, Thou knowest I had rather be hanged on that tree, than go to preach; but that I believe Thou dost require it at my hand." And many a time I have said, "Except some one be converted this time, I will take it for granted that I may leave off speaking in Thy name." But, O, the condescension of the Most High! For He so far bore with my weakness, that some were converted as sure as I asked the token. For all that, I acted the part of Jonah, and fled into the fields by a wood-side, when a great congregation was gathered together, and begged me to preach to them. But the hand of the Lord was upon me; and I fell flat on my face on the ground, and thought that if ever a living man tasted the cup of the damned, I did. I then cried out, "Let me die! let me die! for why should I live to see the destruction of my people? Or wherefore should I ever speak in Thy name, and by Thy word beget children for the slaughter?" I lay about an hour with my face on the grass: but, O, the anguish my soul was in! The sufferings of our Lord and His apostles were brought to my mind, whose cup I had once desired at the Lord's hands. But now, when it was in a small degree put in my hand, I chose rather to die than to drink it.

I now began to be ashamed before the Lord, when I considered how wonderfully He had dealt with me; so that the tears began to flow, and my heart was broken within me. Then I said, "I am not my own, but Thine: therefore, Thy will be done in me, on me, and by me." In that instant the cloud broke,

and the Sun of Righteousness arose on my soul: so that I cried out, "Lord, continue with me as Thou art now, and I am ready to go to hell and preach to devils, if Thou require it." Then I came home, expecting the people to be gone; but they were waiting about the door of my house. I got up and preached to them, and that night two men declared that God for Christ's sake had forgiven all their sins.

I thought, after I had done, if I had had ten pounds, I would have given them for one hour's conversation with Mr. John Wesley; but I despaired of ever having an opportunity, except I went to London on purpose; and I said, "I am not worthy of an upright man to converse with: therefore I am encompassed about with briars and thorns."

After some time, I was told, that there were twenty preachers come to the Smith-House; and that four or five of them were clergymen who had been with Mr. Wesley; but they were now convinced of his errors, and content to be poor sinners, and hoped I should see my error in a little time, and come to the Brethren; for all of them, they said, had been as blind as I was, and as much bigoted to Mr. Wesley's notions. I told them, that what they called light, I believed to be gross darkness; for it did not agree with what the Scriptures showed to be the way to heaven. One of their exhorters said to me, that there were several of the Moravian preachers that could write as good Scriptures as the Bible; that the very power which the apostles had did rest on the Moravian preachers. I told him, I did not believe a word of it: I believed them to be a fallen people; and I prayed God that they might repent, and do their first works. I said, "I am sorry for

Mr. Ingham ; for he never will do half so much good as he has done hurt, by bringing them into this country ; for they do not labour to convert sinners, but to turn saints out of the way that leads to heaven." But he said, it was I that was wrong, for they were the most experienced men in the world ; and it was believed by many, that Count Zinzendorf was so familiar with the Lamb, that many hundreds who were now in hell would be saved by his prayers.

A few days after, they were to have a great meeting at Gomersal Field-house ; and one came and told me, that Mr. Ingham desired me to be there. Accordingly I went, but could not get into the house where they were reading the letters, nor near the door, for the multitude : so I walked into the croft, where there were about two hundred people, who had gone from the door, because they could not hear ; so I preached to them in the croft, while they read the letters within. I think there were five or six preachers, and four exhorters, and near a hundred people, who were looked upon as the chief of their Societies. Then Mr. Ingham stood up, and said, that the country-people were surprised to see so many of the Brethren come together ; they thought it prudent not to have so much preaching, till they were settled awhile, for fear it should make them persecute the Brethren ; "and I desire that none of the young men will expound, till they are ordered by the Brethren. We shall meet again this day month ; and then we will let you know what we are all to do." Then he spake to them one by one, and said "I hope you will be obedient, and not expound any more till you have orders." They all replied, "Yes sir." He then turned to me, saying, "John, I hope you will leave off, till you have orders from the

church." I said, "No, sir, I will not leave off: I dare not, for I did not begin by the order of man, nor by my own will; therefore, I shall not leave off by your order: for I tell you plainly, I should have left off without your bidding, but that I believed, if I did, I should be damned for disobedience." He replied, "You see these young men are obedient to the elders; and they have been blessed in their labours as well as you." I said, "I cannot tell how they have been blessed; but I think, if God had sent them on His own errand, they would not stop at your bidding." Then one of the preachers said, "The spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets: therefore, they are right, and you are wrong; for they are subject." I replied, "You are not obedient to the prophets of God that were of old; for God saith by one of them, 'I have set watchmen upon the walls of Jerusalem, that shall not cease day nor night;' but you can hold your peace for a month together, at man's bidding." Then, turning to Mr. Ingham, I said, "You know that many have been converted by my exhorting lately, and a great many are under convictions: what a sad thing then would it be, to leave them as they are!" He replied, "Our Saviour can convert souls without your preaching." I replied, "Yes, or yours either: and He can give us corn without ploughing or sowing, but He does not; neither hath He promised that He will." He said, "Be still one month, and then you will know more of your own heart." I replied, "With one proviso, I will." He said, "What is that?" I answered, "If you can persuade the devil to be still for a month: but if he goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, and God hath put a sword into my hand, I

am determined to attack him, wheresoever I meet him; and wheresoever I meet sin, I meet Satan." Some of them said, that their ears burned on their heads, to hear me speak to such a man as Mr. Ingham. I answered, I would speak to a gentleman as I would to a beggar, in the cause of God. Mr. Ingham said, "It must needs be, that offences will come; but woe to him by whom they do come." I replied, "Sir, take care that your curse does not fall on your own head." Then he charged all the people, as they loved him and the Brethren, that they should not let me preach in their houses, nor encourage me by hearing me elsewhere. I replied, "I hope you will not hinder those who were converted under my word from hearing me; for they are my own children." He said, they would hinder them; for they were none of mine, but our Saviour's children. I answered, "I have as much right to call them my children, as St. Paul had to call the Galatians his; and if they perish by being turned out of the way through you, I will require their blood at your hand." Then Mr. Clapham said, "May not I have some private conversation with John?" Mr. Ingham answered, "Yes." And Mr. Clapham said, "He shall be my teacher while I live." So it was; for he died in the faith within a fortnight.

When I got home, there were several people at my house waiting to be instructed in the way to the kingdom. One of them cried out, "What is the matter? Are you not well? you look so pale!" I said, "I have neither pain nor sickness of body: but my soul is disordered within me; for they have bereaved me of my children, and commanded them not to hear me before my face. O, these treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously! I am sorry Mr.

Ingham should be a tool in their hands, to turn the simple out of the way ; but I hope he does it in ignorance : if he knows what he is doing, he will be a miserable man ; for it is a less crime to take a child of God, and cut his throat, and thereby send him to heaven at once, than to turn him out of the way, and to destroy both body and soul. Nevertheless, let us pray for him and them.” So we went to prayer ; and when we arose from our knees, I took the Bible, requesting God to speak to me by His word. I opened on Isaiah xlix. 19, “ Thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. Thy children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me : give place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, removing to and fro ? and who hath brought up these ? Behold, I was left alone ; these, where had they been ? ” At the reading of which words I and all that were in the house were so affected that we burst into weeping ; and God gave me one child, in answer to my prayer, that night.

It was soon spread about that Mr. Ingham and Nelson had differed ; and many said, “ We shall now see an end of his new religion ! ” Several of them who once professed to love me as their own lives, now became my open enemies, and laboured to draw all from me they could. They said, I made my Bible my god ! and would take it up in a scornful manner, saying, “ This is John Nelson’s god ! Poor man, he hurts himself much by reading in it : it would be

better for him if he would let it alone, and abide by his heart." Then I said, "Woe is me, that my mother ever bare me, to be a man of strife to all that are about me; but, Lord, I commit my cause to Thee."

So I went on preaching repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; insisting that those who believed should be careful to maintain good works. But many that once said they might bless God they ever heard me, now called me legal, and told me to my face, that I never knew the Gospel liberty, nor what it was to enjoy the poor-sinnership. I replied, "I do not desire to know it: I only want to know the perfect and acceptable will of God, and power to do the same." But they cried out, they had nothing to do, for the Lamb had done all for them.

After their next monthly meeting, one who had exhorted came and called me out of my house, saying he wanted to speak with me. I went out; when he told me the Brethren had sent him; and they had the same power as the apostles had: all that withstood them were soon miserable. I answered, "What do you hobble at in your speech? If you came to tell me that they have given me up into the hands of the devil, speak out, Michael." He said they had. I replied, "I hope I shall pray for them as long as I live; but do you go back and tell them, I have the devil under my heel, and he can never hurt me so long as I have the grace of God."

Soon after, I met with another that had got into the poor-sinnership, who held his neck on one side, and talked as if he had been bred up on the borders of Bohemia. He said, the Brethren were sorry for me; nay, he heard some of them say, that they would

take care of my wife and children. I told him, I would see my wife and children die on a dunghill, before I would sell my soul and the souls of my country-people..

I still kept close to God by prayer and fasting, and was daily refreshed with a sense of His love ; He also opened my mouth more and more to speak His word, so that sinners were daily converted. Samuel Mitchell encouraged me much, and went with me almost every night that I went out of town, often four or five miles, after we had done our work ; and we used to come back together the same night in all sorts of weather.

One night, after a day of fasting, I dreamed that Mr. John and Mr. Charles Wesley were both sitting by my fire-side, and that Mr. John said, “I will stay but a few days now ; for I must go into the North, and return at such a time and stay with you a week.” The next day, when I told it, one said, “If thou hast dreamed so, they will certainly come.” I replied, “I no more expect them than I expect the king to come.” But in a few months after they came, and sat in the very posture I dreamed ; and Mr. John Wesley spoke the very words.

I was desired once more to go to Gomersal Field-head, to speak with Mr. Ingham. When I got there, David Taylor was with him in the parlour, and spoke kindly to me ; but when Mr. Taylor was gone, he began to talk to me about making a division among the Brethren. I told him, I did not want to make a division ; I wanted the people to be saved. But he said, “We cannot receive you nor Mr. Wesley into our community, till he publicly declares he has printed false doctrine, and you declare you have preached false.” I said, “Wherein ?” He then

burst out into laughter, and said, "In telling the people that they may live without committing sin." I replied, "Do you call that false doctrine?" He answered, "I do, I do; and Mr. Wesley has written false doctrine, teaching the same errors." He quoted some words: then I said, "They are not Mr. Wesley's, but St. John's words: it is St. John says, 'Let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous; and he that committeth sin is of the devil.' So, if St. John be right, every one that preacheth contrary to what Mr. Wesley has written here, and what I have preached, is a deceiver and betrayer of souls." "If that be your opinion," said Mr. Ingham, "we cannot receive you into our church." I replied, "I do not want to be one of you; for I am a member of the Church of England." He answered, "The Church of England is no church; we are the church." I said, "We! Whom do you mean?" He replied, "I and the Moravian Brethren." I said, "I have no desire to have any fellowship with you or them: it has been better for my soul since I have been wholly separated from you; and God has blessed my labours more since I was told they had delivered me up to Satan than ever before. Therefore I think it is better to have their curse, than to have communion with them." He replied, "If you think so, I have no more to say to you," and then turned his back on me.

When I went home, I met with one that had got into the *liberty*; and he told me that the devil had sent me into Yorkshire, to hinder the Brethren from having the country to themselves. I answered, "If Satan sent me, he is divided against himself; for you know, by my preaching many that were grossly wicked are turned to live a righteous life." He

said, "No men should be damned but for their own righteousness;" and when I mentioned any Scripture, he laughed me to scorn, saying, "You will never be happy till you leave off those Scripture notions, and come to your own heart, and be a poor sinner."

Now a trial came upon me from another quarter. Some of them came to my house, when I was from home, and talked with my wife, stirring her up against me, so that she was tempted to go to them, and leave me; and the temptation was so strong, that she got out of bed three times to go to them. Nay, the more I reasoned with her from Scripture, in ever so loving a manner, the more she was set against me. Then I had none but my old refuge, to get to God by prayer and fasting; and the Lord took the matter into His own hand, and showed her wherein she had been deceived, and made her a staff in my hand and a support to my soul again.

About this time one of my neighbours that used to hear me preach was going to London, and said, "I shall be glad to see Mr. John Wesley, whom you call your father in the Gospel." I replied, "If you will carry a few lines to him from me, you may see and hear him too." In this letter I desired Mr. Wesley to write to me, and, as he was my father in the Gospel, to give me some instructions how to proceed in the work that God had begun by such an unpolished tool as I. When he got to London, he wrote to me, that he had seen Mr. Wesley, and gave him the letter; who read it, and asked him some questions about me, and said, "Do you write by this night's post, and tell him I shall be at his house on Tuesday next, if God permit." I got the letter on Sunday, and was melted into tears before the Lord.

That day the Lord blessed our souls much, while we were praying that He would conduct His servant safely to us, and bless his coming amongst us; but he was detained on the road, so that it was Wednesday at nine o'clock in the forenoon when he arrived at Birstal. He sent for me to the inn, from whence I conducted him to my house; and he sat down by my fire-side, in the very posture I had dreamed about four months before, and spoke the same words I dreamed he spoke.

Before he went to Newcastle, large companies of those that had left me came to hear him; several of whom said, they never heard such a sermon in their lives, nor ever felt so much of the power of God under any man's preaching.

Some said, when Mr. Ingham came first, he was often telling of this Mr. Wesley, saying, he believed he never talked with him but it was a blessing to his soul, and extolled him above any man that ever they heard him talk of; and now they thought he exceeded all that Mr. Ingham had said about him; but they were greatly surprised, that Mr. Ingham could go through Birstal, without calling to see Mr. Wesley.

When Mr. Wesley came from Newcastle, their minds were changed; for they did not come to hear him. I asked several of them the reason, and they told me Mr. Ingham declared he preached false doctrine, and it was not safe to hear him.

However, he did not preach in vain; for God blessed his word, and his coming was a great blessing to my soul. I said to him, "Sir, you may make use of Jacob's words: 'The children thou hast begotten in Egypt before are mine:' for I freely deliver them to your care." After he had spent

about a week, he left me : and now they that stayed with me were confirmed in the truth they had received ; and many were convinced of the necessity of being born again ; so that greater multitudes than ever came to hear, and several were converted.

One Saturday night, there came a number of people that were halting between the Germans and me ; and as I preached to them, my mouth was almost stopped, and all the time it appeared to me as if I were ploughing upon a rock. Nevertheless, when I had done, and got to the fire-side, the people did not offer to go away, but stood as beggars that wanted a morsel of bread. I then took up the Bible, and opened on the Prophecy of Isaiah, where it saith, “I have blotted out thy transgressions as a cloud, and thy sins as a thick cloud : return unto Me ; for I have redeemed thee.” And I said, “Hear ye the word of the Lord !” So I read these words to them as I stood, and began to explain them, when the power of God came as a mighty wind, and many cried out, “Lord, save, or we perish !” I fell upon my knees, and called upon God to heal the bones that were broken, and to show mercy to the poor and needy : and He heard our cry, so that seven testified that God, for Christ’s sake, had blotted out their sins that night ; and most of them told me, they purposed only to hear me that time, and to have gone to the Germans the next day.

Now the people from every quarter flocked to Birstal on the Sabbath ; but, as yet, there came only three from Leeds,—Mary Shent, and two other women.

It was about May, when Mr. John Wesley came into Yorkshire, and towards Michaelmas that Mr. Charles Wesley and Mr. Charles Graves came.

They stayed a few days, then went on to Newcastle, with an intent to return in a fortnight ; but the Lord opened such a door in that place, that Mr. Wesley stayed some time longer. Mr. Graves came at the time appointed, and the Lord blessed his coming to several souls. I remember, he preached one night at Armley, and when he had done, I gave an exhortation ; and the Lord applied the virtue of His precious blood to many souls that night ; and for a whole week together there were some that felt the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

When Mr. Charles Wesley came back from Newcastle, the Lord was with him in such a manner, that the pillars of hell seemed to tremble : many that were famous for supporting the devil's kingdom, fell to the ground, while he was preaching, as if they had been thunder-struck. One day he had preached four times ; and one that had been amongst the people all the day, said at night, twenty-two had received forgiveness of their sins that day.

I think, from the time of Mr. Charles Wesley and Mr. Graves's first coming, and their leaving Yorkshire, after their return from Newcastle, which was about a month, there were added to the true believers near four-score. Then they began to cry out, "The place is too strait for us : we should have a greater house!" So that the words of Isaiah, which I opened on when the Germans bereaved me of my former children, were fulfilled.

About this time William Shent was converted : and there began to be an uproar in Leeds, about his saying he knew his sins forgiven. Some, however, believed his report, and had a desire to hear for themselves ; neither could he be content to eat his morsel alone, for his heart panted for the salvation of all his neighbours.

The Christmas following, he desired me to go and preach at Leeds; but when I gave notice of it to the Society, they advised me not to go till we had kept a day of fasting and prayer. So we humbled ourselves before the Lord on the Friday, and on Sunday night I went to Leeds, several of the brethren accompanying me. As we were going over the bridge, we met two men, who said to me, "If you attempt to preach in Leeds, you need not expect to come out again alive; for there is a company of men that swear they will kill you." I answered, "They must ask my Father's leave; for if He have any more work for me to do, all the men in the town cannot kill me till I have done it."

When we got to brother Shent's, he had provided a large empty house to preach in, and it was well filled with people. As soon as I got upon the stairs, I felt an awful sense of God rest upon me; and the people behaved as people that feared God, and received the word with meekness.

Now the Armley Society became a nursing mother to the new-born souls at Leeds; for there were several steady souls at Armley, who had stood from the beginning without wavering; and I trust we shall meet together in heaven.

Some time after we had begun at Leeds, Mr. John Bennet, from Chinley in Derbyshire, came to our town, and sent for me to the inn. I did not know him; but by his dress I took him to be a preacher. I said, "I do not know you: pray what is your name?" He told me. I asked him, if he came from Mr. Wesley: he said, No. He was not in connexion with him; he was in fellowship with the Moravian Brethren: but he had had a great opinion of Mr. Wesley for some time, till he saw a little pamphlet

which Mr. Wesley had lately published, which he styles, "The Character of a Methodist," and it turned his mind. I asked, "Sir, what do you find wrong there?" He replied, "There is too much perfection in it for me." I answered, "Then you think a less degree of holiness will fit you for heaven, than what is mentioned there: pray what are the words you stumble at?" On his telling me, I said, "They are the words of St. John." But he said, "We know by experience that there is no such thing to be attained in this life." I replied, "If your experience does not answer to what St. Paul and St. John speak, I shall not regard it:" and when I mentioned some passages of Scripture, he did not believe that what I said was Scripture. I pulled out my Bible, and showed him the words; and when he had read them, his countenance changed, and he cavilled no more.

When we met again, we seemed to be of one heart and judgment; for God revealed His will to him soon after he had parted with me, and made him an instrument to turn many to righteousness, and to bring me and my brethren to preach in Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire.

The first time I went, he met me at Marsden, to conduct me into Cheshire; but as I went over a great common, a little behind Huddersfield, a dog leaped out of the heath, and came and smelted at my leg, and walked by my side for near a mile: he then went to the houses that were a little out of the way, and bit several dogs, and came running after me again, and walked by my side till he saw another house, where he fought with a dog; then followed me again. Thus he went on for about five miles, and went with me into the inn at Marsden, when he sat

down by my side. There were several men in the house, whom I asked, if any of them knew whose dog that was ; but none of them could tell. I said, “I think he is mad ;” but they laughed me to scorn. Soon after, another dog came in, and he went and bit him directly, and ran out, and bit four more ; and then the men pursued and killed him. When I saw that God had kept me in such imminent danger, I was greatly humbled before Him.

As Mr. Bennet and I went over to Stanedge, we met David Taylor, who had got so much into the poor-sinnership, that he would scarcely speak to me. He called Mr. Bennet to a distance, and said, he was sorry that he was going to take me into Derbyshire ; for I was so full of law and reason, that I should do a great deal of hurt wherever I preached.

I preached twice that afternoon ; once at Hopkin-pit, in Lancashire, and the other time at Woodley, in Cheshire. It was given out, unknown to me, for me to preach at Manchester Cross on the Sunday in the afternoon. About ten people went with me from Mr. Lackwood’s to Manchester. When we arrived there, I do not know but there might be two thousand people gathered together at the Cross ; and most of them behaved well. But when I was in the middle of my discourse, one at the outside of the congregation threw a stone, which cut me on the head : however, that made the people give greater attention, especially when they saw the blood run down my face ; so that all was quiet till I had done, and was singing a hymn. Then the constable and his deputy came and seized me and Mr. Bennet, and said, “ You must go before the justice.” I asked, “ By what order ? ” He held up his staff, saying that was his warrant, and he would make me go. I

answered, “ I will not resist ; for if I have done anything contrary to the law, I ought to suffer by the law.” He said, I should suffer for what I had done. Then he began to strike the people that crowded about us. As soon as he and his deputy could get through the multitude, they out-ran us : when I called and said, “ Stay, gentlemen ; for we cannot get through the people as fast as you.” But the people crowded about us in such a manner, that we saw the constable no more. Afterwards we rode to Jonathan Holmes’s. That night we had a blessed meeting ; and the Lord was much with us all the time I stayed in those places.

Soon after, Mr. John Wesley came into Yorkshire again ; and the Lord blessed his coming to many souls. When he set out for Newcastle, he desired me to go to Grimsby, in Lincolnshire, and to spend a few days there, among some people that had once run well, but were turned out of the way by one that had come down from London, who had got into the poor-sinnership, and was made free from the righteous law of God, and from all ordinances and good works. He brought many of them into his own liberty ; so that they sold their Prayer-Books, left off reading and praying, and followed the motions of their own minds, which they called the Lamb in their hearts. But one or two remained under the law, as they called it ; that is, they still continued to read the Bible, and durst not leave off prayer, nor any other ordinance that Christ had appointed. These came to Epworth to seek the pure Gospel ; and when they heard Mr. Wesley, they said, “ his word was as sweet wine to a thirsty soul.”

I set out with a great sense of my own weakness, and was ready to turn back : then I opened my

Bible where these words were written, “I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the ground.” I cried out, “Lord, give me strength and understanding for the work, if Thou hast called me to it.” I opened my book again, on Isaiah xiv. 1, “The Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them.” That night I came to Epworth, and preached to a large congregation.

Next morning, I and a man that belonged to Grimsby, and a boy about twelve years of age, set out on foot for Grimsby; but night came upon us when we were five miles short of it, and, there being no public-house near, we went to several farm-houses to ask for lodging, but could get none. Then we went to a poor house, where I prevailed with the people to let the boy lie with two of their own boys; and I said to the man, “Let us go and seek a bed somewhere else, or a stable to lie in.” As we went on in the dark, we saw a light at a small distance, and we went over a field to it. I knocked at the door, and they bade us come in: there were four men, three women, and two boys, sitting by the fire. As soon as I entered, I said, “Peace be to this house;” at which words the people started up as if I had thrown fire at them. I said, “We are two wayfaring men; and if you will entertain us for a night, we will satisfy you.” They got us a good supper, and made up a good bed. I talked to them about the way of salvation, and went to prayer with them; and they were so affected, that the master and the mistress talked to me two hours after we were in bed. The next morning, after breakfast, I went to pay the woman; but she said her husband charged her to take nothing, but, on the contrary, to

give us some money to support us on the road ; but I replied, " Not one farthing will we have ; and if you will not take our money, I pray God reward you with everlasting consolation ! "

We then went where we had left the boy, and paid the people for him, and set out for Grimsby, which we reached by ten o'clock. The people soon heard that I was come, and flocked to me directly, when I prayed with them, and began to exhort ; but many of them despised my words, saying, I was too legal for them. I then took up my Bible, and said, " Hear ye the word of the Lord !" So I read two or three verses, and bade them try themselves by that standard : then I read in another place, and said, " If you will compare your consciences with these scriptures, you may see what state your souls are in." One woman turned pale, and began to tremble, saying, " I clearly see we are deluded, and that what we called the Lamb in our hearts is nothing but the devil." Then she cried out, " Alas ! alas ! what must we do ? " We went to prayer again, and God made the kingdom of Satan to shake once more in that place.

The second night a schoolmaster sent me word that he would give me leave to preach in his school, which would hold several hundreds of people : but those that had fallen into the poor-sinnership told me, if I did, they durst not go to hear me ; for they should be mobbed, and I should be killed. I said, " As the gentleman has made me the offer, I will accept it, and, by the grace of God, will preach if there were as many devils in it as there are tiles on it." Accordingly I went, and it was well filled from side to side, and the people behaved well ; I found great liberty in speaking ; and when I had

done, several cried out, "This is the way of salvation!"

When I came back to brother Blow's, those that had been shorn of their strength confessed their fearfulness, and said, "While we continued in the spirit in which we were converted, we were as bold as lions. O! what shall we do to recover our strength?" I told them to humble themselves before the Lord with prayer and fasting, and He would snatch them out of the snare of the devil, and give them back their first love.

I preached again the next morning, and set out for Epworth. In my way I stopped at Ferry, where I preached at four in the afternoon, and got into Epworth by seven that evening.

When I came there, so large a company were gathered together, that I could not get into the house, nor yet one-third of the people, though it was dark and snowed. However, I desired them to hand me out a chair: so I stood up in the snow, and preached, and they behaved as well as ever I knew a congregation in my life; and it appeared that God blessed His word to many souls that night.

When I returned home, I found God had opened the mouth of Jonathan Reeves, and blessed his word to numbers about Birstal; and we laboured together for some time, till I returned into Mr. Bennet's circuit.

I went into the Peak to preach at Monyash, when a clergyman, with a great company of men that worked in the lead-mines, all being in liquor, came in just as I began to give out the hymn. As soon as we began to sing, he began to halloo and shout, as if he were hunting with a pack of hounds, and so continued all the time we sang. When I began to

pray, he attempted to overturn the chair that I stood on ; but he could not, although he struck so violently with his foot, that he broke one of the arms of the chair quite off. When I began to preach, he called on his companions to pull me down ; but they replied, "No, sir; the man says nothing but the truth. Pray, hold your peace, and let us hear what he has to say." He then came to me himself, took me by the collar of my shirt, and pulled me down ; then he tore down my coat cuffs, and attempted to tear it down the back ; then took me by the collar, and shook me. I said, "Sir, you and I must shortly appear at the bar of God, to give an account of this night's work." He replied, "What ! must you and I appear before God's bar together ?" I said, "As sure as we look one another in the face now." He let go my throat, took my Bible out of my hand, and, turning it over and over, said, "It is a right Bible ; and if you preach by the Spirit of God, let me hear you preach from this text ;" which was, "Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men in the city." I got up, and began to preach from this text ; and when any offered to make a noise, the miners said, "Hold your peace, or we will make you ; and let us hear what he will make of the parson's text." As I went on, the parson said, "That is right ; that is true." After a while he looked round, and saw many in tears ; then he looked at me, and went away, leaving me to finish my discourse in peace. All the rest of the circuit I had peaceable meetings ; and the Lord kept still adding to the number of His children.

At my return home, I began to preach in the open street, at brother Shent's door, in Leeds, and great companies flocked to hear me. The first time I stood

up in the street, I was struck on the head with an egg and two potatoes ; but that neither hindered me from speaking, nor the multitude from hearing. I heard that several serious people, as soon as I had done, went to an old clergyman to ask his advice about the doctrine I had preached, and told him as much of my sermon as they could. He answered, he hoped no one had disturbed me for preaching that doctrine ; and on being told that some had thrown potatoes at me, and spoiled my wig and coat with a rotten egg, he said, he would rather lose his arm than throw at a man for preaching such doctrine, for that was the marrow of the Gospel. Many lost their prejudice by his word, and embraced the truth with joy ; so that I preached in the streets at Leeds every other Sunday morning, with very little disturbance.

After some time, I went into Lincolnshire again ; and the congregation was so large at Grimsby, that I was obliged to stand upon a table at brother Blow's back-door for several days together. As I was preaching, the minister and three men came to play at quoits, as near the people as they could get ; but with all their playing and shouting they could not draw any one from hearing.

Some friends from Tetney and Clearthorps prevailed with me to go to a shepherd's house near the sea-coast. There was a large company gathered together in that desert, and I opened my book on Galatians i. 3 : " Grace be unto you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." I felt much of the Lord's presence, and the power of God was so

great among us, that the people fell flat on their faces, or kneeled down on their knees, so that there was not one left standing, and their cry was so great, that my voice could not be heard: then I fell on my knees, and called upon the Lord to heal the bones that were broken; and I believe many will praise God for that meeting to all eternity.

On my return to Epworth, I was desired to go by Hainton, and several from Grimsby went with me. When we got there, William Fenwick told me, there was a company of men at the bowling-green, who had made themselves almost drunk, on purpose to kill me. I answered, that God was my defence, and I believed He would deliver me from them all. As soon as they heard I was come, they all left the bowls, and came to William Fenwick's, many of them with sticks, about two feet long, and as thick as a man's wrist: some of them began to sing a psalm, and others to curse and swear; but I reproved them, and they had no power to meddle with me. At the appointed hour, I went into the street, and spoke to them in the name of the Lord; and God put a bridle in the jaws of the wicked, so that they stood patiently to hear, while I was reasoning with them about the necessity of being made holy here, that we may not be damned eternally. A lusty, red-faced gentlewoman exclaimed aloud, "I am a Papist, and believe I shall be cleansed in purgatory." When I had done, I said, "I appeal to all your consciences that I have not spoken my own words, but the words of the Lord." A gentleman answered, "We allow all you say is true; yet you deserve to be set in the stocks for delivering it in the street."

As I went into the house, one hit me with an egg on my head, and the people crowded so fast into the

house that I could scarcely turn myself. At last, I got to sit upon a dresser, and spoke to them for an hour, and God began to work on several of them ; but as soon as they began to tremble, and cry out, “Lord, save, or we perish,” others made all the haste they could to get out of the house. When I got to Epworth, I found the people much in earnest, and my own soul was greatly blessed in speaking to them.

After I had laboured in Yorkshire awhile longer, Mr. John Wesley sent for me to London. But, by this time, I had almost worn out my clothes, and I did not know where the next should come from : my wife said, I was not fit to go anywhere as I was. I answered, “I have worn them out in the Lord’s work, and He will not let me want long.” Two days after, a tradesman in our parish, that did not belong to our Society, came to my house, and brought me a piece of blue cloth for a coat, and a piece of black cloth for a waistcoat and breeches : so I see the Lord is mindful of them that trust in Him.

As soon as I well could, I set out for London on foot ; but one of my neighbours was going, and he took my place, and let me ride sometimes. I preached at Nottingham Cross as I went.

I stayed a few days at London ; then Mr. Richards and I set out for Oxford. We both preached at High-Wycomb as we went.

When we came to Oxford, we met three young gentlemen in their gowns in the street ; but I think I never heard a soldier or sailor swear worse than they did. Mr. Richards, being first, and a collegian himself, said, “Gentlemen, I am ashamed to hear you : it is a sad thing that you should come here to learn to be guides to others in the way to heaven,

and continue to go in the way to destruction yourselves!" One of them said, with a curse, "What, are you a Presbyterian?" When I spoke, another of them said, "These chaps belong to poor Wesley:" so they went away.

We spent a Sabbath at Oxford; and some of the collegians behaved very rudely as I was preaching in the evening; but the Lord put His hook in their jaws, and kept them from doing any harm to the people, or hindering me in my discourse.

The next day we got to Cirencester, where we stayed two nights. One of the brethren then went with us to Bristol. On all this journey we had but one horse between Mr. Richards and me.

After tarrying a few days at Bristol, and preaching once at Bath, Mr. Wesley, Mr. Downs, and I set out for Cornwall. Mr. Downs and I had but one horse; so we rode by turns. Mr. Wesley preached at Tavistock Cross and Exeter Castle, as we went. We generally set out before Mr. Wesley and Mr. Shepherd.

One day, having travelled twenty miles without baiting, we came to a village, and inquired for an inn; but the people told us there was none in the town, nor any on our road within twelve Cornish miles: then I said, "Come, brother Downs, we must live by faith." When we had stood awhile, I said, "Let us go to yonder house, where the stone porch is, and ask for something:" so we did, and the woman said, "We have bread, butter, and milk, and good hay for your horse." When we had refreshed ourselves, I gave the woman a shilling; but she said, she did not desire anything. I said, "I insist upon it."

We got to Bodmin that night; but it was late before Mr. Wesley and Mr. Shepherd arrived, having

lost the path on the twelve-mile common, and found the way again by the sound of the bells. The next day we got to Gwennap, and the day after to St. Ives. The following day I worked at my own business, and continued to work for several days.

When I had done my job of work, I went to St. Just, and preached at the cross to a large company of well-behaved people. Then I went to the Land's End, and preached the same evening. Next morning, which was Sunday, I came to Morva church: after service, I preached there, and in the evening at Zunnor.

When I had been out a week, I returned to St. Ives, and found brother Downs in a fever, so that he was not able to preach at all. All that time, Mr. Wesley and I lay on the floor: he had my great-coat for his pillow, and I had Burkitt's Notes on the New Testament for mine. After being here near three weeks, one morning, about three o'clock, Mr. Wesley turned over, and, finding me awake, clapped me on the side, saying, "Brother Nelson, let us be of good cheer: I have one whole side yet, for the skin is off but on one side." We usually preached on the commons, going from one common to another, and it was but seldom any one asked us to eat and drink.

One day we had been at St. Hilary Downs, and Mr. Wesley had preached from Ezekiel's vision of dry bones, and there was a shaking among the people as he preached. As we returned, Mr. Wesley stopped his horse to pick the blackberries, saying, "Brother Nelson, we ought to be thankful that there are plenty of blackberries; for this is the best country I ever saw for getting a stomach, but the worst that ever I saw for getting food. Do the people think we can live by preaching?" I said, "I

know not what they may think; but one asked me to eat something as I came from St. Just, when I ate heartily of barley-bread and honey." He said, " You are well off: I had a thought of begging a crust of bread of the woman where I met the people at Morva, but forgot it till I had got some distance from the house."

One Sunday, having been at the Land's-End in the morning, and at Morva at noon, I came to Zunnor to preach at night, and got there before the afternoon service began. In the sermon, the minister said, " Here is a people who hold that damnable Popish doctrine of justification by faith; therefore, I beg you not to hear them." After the service was over, I went about two hundred yards from the church, and got upon a rock, where I began to sing a hymn; and I believe the whole congregation came to hear me. According to the light I had, I showed what was the faith of the Gospel, and what the faith of the Church of Rome.

I stayed a fortnight after Mr. Wesley was gone, and I found my soul was much blessed among the people. When Mr. Wesley arrived at Bristol, he wrote to me, and desired me to call at three different places to preach, in my way to Bristol.

When I left Captain Hitchin's, I was benighted on the twelve-mile common, and was wet to the skin; but, by the providence of God, I came to the house where I had called in going down. I knocked at the door, and the woman knew my voice, and said, " The Lord bless you! Come in." As soon as I went into the house, they pulled off my wet clothes, and put me on dry ones, and got me something warm for supper: they took my wet clothes out of my bags, which they rinsed, dried, and ironed. We

sang a hymn, went to prayer, and I gave them an exhortation that night. The next morning, the man rose up, and alarmed that and another village ; so that by seven o'clock I had about three hundred to preach to, who all seemed to receive the word with joy. I heard soon afterward, that the man and his wife who received us had received the Lord that sent us.

The next night I came to Sticklepath, and preached to a large congregation in a field. As I was speaking, a woman, who had been brought up a Quaker, began to tremble, and in a little time sunk down upon the grass, and lay till I had done. Then they brought her to Mrs. Bridgood's, where I was ; and I prayed with her. Although most of the company were Quakers, yet they desired me to sing, and read several of our hymns.

The next morning, before I began to preach, the woman that fell down, with two more, came into the room where I was : she said, "I had no rest in the night, the anguish of my soul was so great ; and I desire thee to pray with me." We went to prayer ; and when we rose up, she said, "O praise the Lord ! for to-day is the day of Pentecost with me."

After I had done preaching, an exciseman, who came from Crockern-wells, told me, that it was given out for me to preach there at ten o'clock that forenoon, and he was to conduct me. So we set out directly. I preached in an orchard. Among the rest of the people were a clergyman and his wife. All behaved well.

Almost as soon as I alighted at the Oxford Inn, in Exeter, a man came to conduct me to the place where I was to preach. There was a clergyman in the next room, who soon came into the room where

I was, and asked me how the two Mr. Wesleys did, and insisted upon my supping with him. I told him, I must go to preach first. He said he would go with me; which he did. As I was preaching, the clerk of the parish fell down, and after him another man and woman: they did not cry out, but lay groaning for mercy. After I had done, and the greater part of the people were gone, I went to prayer with them that were in distress.

As we went back to the inn, the clergyman said, "I dare not pray as you did to-night: you prayed that God would give you some fruit in that place, as He had done in others. I have been a preacher for many years, and I cannot say that I have had any fruit; that any one has been converted by my preaching in all my life." I replied, "If you be not converted yourself, and have not a greater commission than man can give you, you may preach all your days, and never convert one soul."

When we were at supper, he asked me how Mr. Wesley went on; and when he heard how he lived, and how he was treated by wicked men, he said, "If that be the way to heaven, I think I shall never get there: my flesh is not brass, nor my bones iron." I replied, "You do not know what you can bear, till you come to be tried." He said, "Well, I believe Mr. Wesley is the greatest man in the kingdom; but I think he uses too much austerity." We talked till eleven o'clock, then parted in love. I saw him no more, but have heard since that he receives Mr. Wesley to preach in his church, and that God has made him an instrument of converting sinners.

I preached the next morning, and then set out for Axminster, where I preached in the open street. at

three in the afternoon, to a well-behaved people, though it was the second day of the fair.

The next day I went to Thorngrove, near Middlesey. That night God blessed His word to many, as appeared afterwards. One gentlewoman was convinced that night, who four years after sent my wife four guineas, which came in good time; for she had borrowed four guineas of a neighbour to buy a cow, and the time for payment was come, and she had not money to pay.

When I got to Bristol, I found my soul much blessed among the people; and in those ten days there were several that found the Lord.

In my return home, I preached at Stroud, and several other places in my way to Wednesbury, whither I came not long after the people had been mobbed in such a cruel manner. I preached in an open yard to very large congregations of people, several times. Some of the mobbers came to hear me, but all behaved well: so He who stops the raging of the sea can stay the madness of the people.

After spending a few days there, I set out for Nottingham, and stayed there two days. I preached at the Malt-cross on the Sabbath, to a large congregation, in great peace; but Monday being a rejoicing day, they had bonfires in the market-place, and some came with squibs to disturb me as I was preaching. One of them threw a squib on fire close to my heels, but a woman kicked it away: the man caught it up again to throw at me, but it burst in his hand, and he went away shaking his head. Another came on the low side of the cross with a design to throw one in my face; but I did not turn my face that way so soon as he expected, and the

squib burst in his hand. As soon as I had done, a serjeant of the army came to me, with tears in his eyes, and said, "In the presence of God, and all this people, I beg your pardon: for I came on purpose to mob you; but when I could get no one to assist me, I stood to hear you, and am convinced of the deplorable state my soul is in, and I believe you are a servant of the living God." He then embraced me, and went away weeping.

When I got home, I found my wife much better, though never likly to recover her former strength; owing to the persecution she met with at Wakefield, when Mr. Larwood was mobbed there. After they had abused him, she, with some women, set out for Birstal; a mob followed them into the fields: when they overtook them, she turned about and spake to them, upon which all the men returned without touching them; but the women followed them till they came to a gate, where they stopped them: they damned her, saying, "You are Nelson's wife, and here you shall die." They saw she was big with child; yet beat her on the body so cruelly, that they killed the child in her womb, and she went home and miscarried directly. This treatment she had reason to remember to her life's end; but God more than made it up to her, by filling her with peace and love.

There had been some disturbance at Leeds; and I was the first that stood up after, at brother Shent's door. A number of men had protested they would pull down the first man that attempted to preach there. But if the fear of God could not restrain them, the fear of the magistrates did; so that they did not meddle with me: only some boys threw about a peck of turnips at me, but not one of them hit me.

That was a blessed morning to many souls: two, that had been enemies, were struck to the ground, and cried out for the disquietude of their souls. I preached often afterwards, with little disturbance, and believers were multiplied in Leeds.

After I had stayed a few months in Yorkshire, I went a third time into Lincolnshire. At Epworth we had peaceable and blessed meetings. But when I came to Grimsby, the minister got a man to beat the town drum through the town, and went before the drum, and gathered all the rabble he could, giving them liquor to go with him to fight for the Church. When they came to Mr. Blow's door, they set up three huzzas, and the parson cried out, "Pull down the house! pull down the house!" But no one offered to touch the house till I had done preaching. Then they broke the windows, till they had not left one whole square about the house; and as the people went out they abused them, till some of the mob began to fight their fellows for abusing the women; so that most of the people got away while they were fighting one with another. Not long after, the minister gathered them together again, and gave them more drink: then they came and broke the stanchions of the windows, pulled up the paving in the streets, which they threw in at the windows, and broke the household goods in pieces; the parson crying out, "If they will not turn out the villain, that we may put him in the black ditch, pull down the house."

While they were drumming, cursing and swearing, fighting and breaking the goods, one of their neighbours, who was not a hearer, went to an alderman, and said, "Some order must be taken with these men; for, if they be suffered to go on as they do,

they will ruin William Blow, and I fear they will kill somebody." But the good alderman said he would do nothing but lend them his mash-tub to pump the preacher in. Then the mob fell out again one with another, and dispersed, after labouring from seven till almost twelve at night. The parson said to the drummer, "I will reward you for your pains: but be sure to come at five in the morning; for the villain will be preaching again then." So the drummer did, and began to beat just as I was going to give out the hymn. When he had beat for near three quarters of an hour, and saw it did not disturb us, he laid down his drum, and stood to hear for himself; and the tears presently ran down his cheeks. When I had ended, he expressed great sorrow for what he had done to disturb us. As he and some others went up the town, the parson met them, and bade them to be sure to come at seven o'clock. He said, "No, sir; I will never beat a drum to disturb yonder people any more, while breath is in my body." So that we had great peace in our shattered house that night, and God's presence amongst us.

The next day I went to Hainton; and when I had done preaching, a grave, elderly gentleman came to me, and said, "Your doctrine is sound, but it would far better become a church." I answered, "Sir, if a man were hungry in the midst of a desert, and wholesome food were brought him, he would not refuse to eat because he was not in the dining-room." He replied, "You are right, you are right. I thank you kindly, and wish you well, and that much good may be done by you wheresoever you preach; for good food is good wherever it is eaten."

When I got to Epworth, I was told the clerk was

drunk, and had been swearing he would pull down the preacher, and take him to such an ale-house, where the curate and some other men were drinking. In the evening, as I was preaching, he came staggering, and rushed in among the people, crying, "Stand out of the way; for I must have the preacher: he must go before my master, that is in such an ale-house." One asked him where his warrant was: he said he had none, but his master had sent him, and he would make me go with him. The people bade him hold his peace, or get about his business; and when he began to be rude, one took him up in his arms, and laid him down upon a dunghill, and there left him.

After I got home, it was much impressed upon me, that some trial was coming upon me; and several times when I was preaching, I have said, "There is a cloud gathering, and it will burst over my head. O, pray for me!" After this, I stayed some time in Yorkshire, and sinners were daily turning from their evil ways; so that several ale-house keepers cursed me to my face, and told me I ought to be transported, for I preached so much hell and damnation, that I terrified the people so, that they durst not spend sixpence with a neighbour.

Some time after I met a gentleman, as I was riding to Leeds, who said something about the weather. I answered, "The Lord orders all things well." He presently said, "I know you, for I have heard you preach; but I do not like you: you lay a wrong foundation for salvation. Do you think that the blood of another man will save me?" I replied, "St. Paul saith, 'Other foundation can no man lay but Christ Jesus;' but you say that is a wrong foundation. Upon what terms do you expect to be

saved?" He said, "By good works." I answered, "You will be the first that got to heaven that way. But, suppose you could, what would you do when you came there?" He said, "What do others do there?" I answered, "They sing, 'Glory to God that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever, that was slain, and hath redeemed us by His blood!'" But your song will be, 'Glory be to myself; for I have quickened my own soul, and qualified myself for heaven!' O sir, what a scandalous song will you have to sing! It will make discord in heaven." He turned pale, and said nothing for some time. When he had rode awhile, he said, "All the Lord requires of us is, to do justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly with God." I answered, "Do you expect to stand or fall by that scripture?" He said, "I do." Then, I replied, "you are lost for ever, if you are to go to heaven for doing justly, for loving mercy, and walking humbly with God. I appeal to your conscience, if you have not come short in every one of these duties. Have you dealt with every man as you would have him do to you, in all circumstances, ever since you knew good from evil? Suppose you had, have you dealt justly with God, and employed every talent that He has committed to your charge to His glory,—both time, wisdom, and learning; house, land, wealth, and trade? If you have used any one talent, and not to the glory of God, you have robbed Him." Then I spoke to the other two. He said, "There is repentance." But I replied, "Not for you; for you are to be saved for doing justly, for loving mercy, and walking humbly with God: if you come short of these duties, you must be damned." He said, "Lord have mercy on me! you are enough to make

any man despair." "Yes," I said, "of saving himself, that he may come to Jesus Christ, and be saved." He argued no more; but heard me patiently, and parted friendly.

One Sunday I was at chapel, where the minister laboured much to persuade the people that there was no such thing as the forgiveness of sins in this world. When he had done, he sent the clerk to desire me to call upon him. I did so, and he told me he understood I was he that went about to delude the people, telling them they might know their sins forgiven in this world; and there is no such thing. He said, he did not know his own sins were forgiven, and he had talked with several learned divines, and there was not one of them that did; and several believed they must never know it till the day of judgment. I answered, "Sir, what will become of their souls till then? will they lie in heaven or hell?" He said, it was an unfair question. I replied, "Sir, if what you say be true, every time we use the Church prayers we offer the sacrifice of fools, and mock God to His face: for this day, you and all the congregation, in my presence, prayed that God would forgive you all your sins, negligences, and ignorances; and you affirmed, in the presence of God, that He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe the Gospel. If He do not, you are a false witness, and a deceiver of the people; yea, and a contemner of the word of God; for St. Peter saith, 'To Him give all the prophets witness, that whosoever believeth in Him doth receive forgiveness of their sins.' And St. Paul saith, 'By Him all that believe are justified from all things.' He doth not say, they shall be justified at the day of judgment, but 'all that believe are justi-

fied.' And St. John saith, ' I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for His name's sake.' " He replied, " You take some part of Scripture." I answered, " I leave all the rest to you to contradict me, if you can. For this day you have denied the faith of the Church you call yourself a minister of; as she saith, ' Before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of His Holy Spirit, no good work can be done.' But you say, there is no such thing as inspiration to be expected in this age. And yet you pray that God would cleanse the thoughts of your heart by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit ! " Then he said, " You have too good a memory for me. Landlady, bring us a pint of ale."—So I left him.

One man in our town that had run well for a season, but had turned from us, and was become a happy sinner, now invited the Germans to preach at his house. One of their chief preachers came, and said, (after preaching,) they had been asking their Saviour about preaching in Birstal; and the Lamb had made it plain to them the time was come that they should have a church in Birstal: which when one came and told me, I said, " God hath showed me to the contrary; and you may go and tell the preacher, that the lamb who told them so is a liar." They came several weeks together, but to no purpose. Then the preacher said, " It is not the Lamb's will that they should come any more." When they told me, I replied, " Their lamb is much given to change: he hath not continued in one mind for three months."

After this, as I was going to Staincliffe to work at my business, about five in the morning, I met with a Dissenting minister. He stopped me, and said, " John,

you go often this way. I would have you come and spend an hour with us; for I want to talk with you." I answered, "I have not an hour to spare; for I go to my work at five in the morning, and work till six at night: then I have always somewhere to go and preach; so that I have scarcely time to read a chapter in the Bible, but at my dinner-hour; and sometimes I have to preach in that hour." He said, "What do you mean by redemption? Do you mean that Christ hath died for all?" I replied, "I do believe He did, or He cannot judge all: for Truth itself cannot condemn any man because he will not believe a lie." He said, "What do you mean?" I answered, "Every man is bound to believe that by nature he is a child of wrath, and by wilful sin an heir of hell; and that while he was in that lost condition, the eternal Son of God, for his sake, took upon Him our nature; and did in that nature fulfil all righteousness for him, and, at last, gave His soul an offering for sin: he must consciously believe that the Lord Jesus Christ loved him, and gave Himself for him, or he must be damned eternally. And if the Lord did not give Himself for him, he must be damned because he does not believe a lie. But you know it is said, 'He, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man; and He gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due season.' And St. John saith, 'He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.' Sir, there are numberless scriptures that say He did die for all; but show me one that saith He did not die for all." He answered, "If He died for all, why are not all saved?" I replied, "Let the Lord answer for Himself:—'Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life.'" He then said,

"You say, 'It is of him that willeth.'" I answered, "It is Christ that saith, 'Ye will not come unto Me.' Do not pretend to be wiser than the Lord that made you. You say you will have no *ifs*; but I say, if you give the promise without the condition, God will take your name out of the book of life. I hope you will weigh these things. I shall be glad to converse with you at some other opportunity; for my time is now expired."

Almost every day, some came to dispute with me as I was at work. And I saw every day more clearly that he who insists on men being saved from their sins by Christ in this world, is like a speckled bird, for all sects and parties, that have not the life of Christ in them, to mock at.

One day, two Quakers fell upon me very hotly, and told me I was carnal, or else I should not make use of carnal ordinances, not seeking the living among the dead. I told them, those ordinances they called carnal, I knew to be spiritual; for God had refreshed my soul in the use of them by His Spirit. "You say I seek the living among the dead: but I do not; for I have found the Lord of life in the great congregation. But if I would leave the Church, where must I go to find a people that are truly alive to God?" They told me, if I were right, I should come to them; for they were the only people that had spiritual worship amongst them. They talked much about George Fox and William Penn, and said, "What thinkest thou of them?" I answered, "I think well of them; but their graces will profit you nothing, except the same change be wrought in your hearts as was in them. Neither do I see that you are God's people any more than those who go to church; for the Lord has set a

mark upon His children, and it will rest on them as long as the world endureth." They asked, "What is that mark?" I replied, "They are hated of all men that know not God. For they who live after the Spirit must be persecuted by those that live after the flesh. I do not see that this is your case, any more than that of those who go to church. Your forefathers had that spot of God's children; but you have lost it as much as the Church." Then one of them turned pale, and said, "Do you believe that God hath no people in the land but the Methodists?" I replied, "I did not say so." He said, "They are the only people that are persecuted now." They then went away, seemingly much discontented.

As I was passing through part of Lancashire, I found the Lord reviving His work among the people. After I had done preaching at our place, a man and his wife came to me, both in tears, and desired me to pray with them. I did so. When I had done, I was exhorting them to abstain from evil, and to continue in prayer, and told them, God would show mercy unto them, for the obedience and blood-shedding of His dear Son. Presently a Dissenter broke out, and said, "You are deceiving the people, and setting them to lean on a broken reed, by telling them that another man's obedience and blood would atone for their sins." I asked him how he could stand before that God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, if there were no merit in the blood of Christ to atone for his sins? He said, "Man hath such noble faculties, that, if he improve them, he will thereby qualify himself for heaven; but you degrade man's nature in your preaching, and set him on a level with the brute beasts." I said, "Did I so?" He replied, "Yes, you did; for I heard you

myself." I replied, "Then, sir, you heard me preach false doctrine; for if I set a natural man upon a level with the beasts, I set him greatly out of his place. I believe he is far worse; for he has not only all the faculties of the beast, which are lust and earthly-mindedness, but the nature of the devil, wrath, pride, malice, and ambition. He is therefore three degrees worse than a beast, till he is created anew in Christ Jesus; so that, if I ranked him with the beasts, I set him above his place." Then he burst out into anger; but I said, "Sir, make use of that reason you speak of, and let me see you save yourself from anger." At which he was ready to strike me; and went away, leaving me, as he said, "in my stupid condition."

When I got about ten miles farther into the country, another Dissenter came into the house, where I was at prayer with a poor man. When I had done, I exhorted him not to rest, till he was sure that the Lord Jesus had loved him, and washed him from his sins in His own blood. At which words the Dissenter spoke out, saying, "I hate to hear people talk of being assured of any such thing, or of perfection in this world." I replied, "Is the Lord of life able to do what He came from heaven to do?" He said, "What is that?" I answered, "To destroy the works of the devil, to make an end of sin, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness." He said, "Shall you make me believe that any man can live without committing sin?" I answered, "I cannot tell whether I can make you believe it or not; but this I can tell you, by the authority of God's word, that if you are not saved from your sins here, you must be damned." "Well," he said, "I care not what you say; for no man can live without com-

mitting sin one day." I replied, "By your talk, it is as necessary for man to commit sin as to eat; for you say he cannot live without it. Now, doth it keep his body or soul alive? Or do you believe, that all mankind are to live in sin, and die without perfecting holiness in the fear of God, and so be damned without hope or help?" He answered, "No: God forbid!" Then I said, "You must believe there is a purgatory, to cleanse the soul in after death. Sir, you and the devil speak one language; for he said to our mother Eve, 'Did God say, In the day that ye eat thereof, ye shall die? Ye shall not die.' God saith, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die; ' but you say, 'The souls of all must continue in sin, and yet they shall not die!'" He said, "You shock me: if things be as you say, what will become of the greatest part of mankind?" I replied, "Our Lord's word is, 'What is that to thee? follow thou Me.'" He said, "I cannot but acknowledge, you have the Scripture on your side; but if you are right, we are sadly wrong. I never did hear one of you in my life; for our minister has warned us not to hear you; but I am determined to hear you this night." So he did, and thanked me kindly when I had done.

At my return home I was told, that they were going to press men for His Majesty's service, and that several of the ale-house keepers and clergymen had agreed to press me for one; and I was advised not to preach for a season, by several of my neighbours: but I told them that I durst not leave off preaching for anything that man could do unto me. They replied, "You should consider that you have a wife and children, and that your wife is now big with child: and if you be taken from them, what can the poor woman do, or how must she provide for her

children?" I said, "Let God look to that: if wicked men be suffered to take away my life, for calling sinners to the blood of Jesus, the Lord, whose servant I am, will be a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless: and were I assured, I should be banished or put to death for preaching, and my wife and children beg their bread bare-foot, I durst not leave off; for the words of our Lord pursue me, 'He that loveth father or mother, wife or children, or his own life, more than Me, is not worthy of Me; and he that would save his life, shall lose it; and he that will lose his life for My sake shall save it.' Therefore, pray for me; but do not tempt me to sin against my own soul."

A few days after, I went to Pudsey; but when I got there, the people of the house durst not let me preach. They told me, the constables had orders to press me; and desired me not to alight, but go back directly. I rode down to a public-house where the constable and some others had met together, and talked with them; and I told the constable, the people had said he had orders to press me; but he said, "I will not; for you do not appear to be a vagrant, and my warrant runs for none but vagrants." Many of the people followed me into the lane; and I sat on horseback, exhorting them to keep close to God by prayer; and the Lord would build the walls of Jerusalem in these troublesome times.

Soon after I went to preach at Leeds. When I got there, I was told that two constables had orders to press me, if I preached that night. I said, "If the people will venture to hear, I dare not but preach;" and immediately I went to the place, where was a large congregation gathered together, to whom I preached; and a blessed season it was.

The two constables gave great heed to what was spoken, and never offered to disturb me or any one of the people, but went away like men that feared God.

I still kept hewing stone in the day-time, and preaching every night. One day as I was at work, the same Dissenting minister that had stopped me one morning came to me, and began to ask me many questions. He seemed offended with my answers, and said he would have none of my *ifs* and *but*s. I answered, “Sir, they are none of mine; they are the words of the Lord Jesus: and who is he that dares put asunder what the Lord hath joined together?” Then he replied, “Do you think God would cut you off, if you were to commit as great a sin as ever you committed in all your life?” I said, “I believe I should thereby cut myself off from God: for the prophet saith, ‘Your sins have separated between you and your God;’ and God saith, ‘My people have committed two evils: for they have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living water, and have hewn out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.’ Now, sir, God would not have said, ‘They have forsaken Me,’ if they had never been acquainted with Him; and I believe that one of the cisterns which they hewed to themselves was the opinion you have in your head, that sin will not separate the soul from God.” He said, “You do not understand the nature of God’s decree; for God doth not look upon sin in the elect: He did not behold iniquity in Jacob, nor see sin in Israel.” I said, “No, sir, He did not, while Jacob was upright, and God was his glory: at that time, God rejoiced over him, to do him good, with His whole heart, and His whole soul: but when he committed whoredom

with the daughters of Moab, and began to bow to their idols, then God's anger was kindled against Israel; and He cut off twenty-four thousand of them in His wrath; even the very people whom Balaam had pronounced blessed."

Then his brother-in-law, who was by him, began to curse and swear, and lifted up his stick, saying, he could find in his heart to knock me down, and called me a d——d dog; and said, "Canst thou have the impudence to talk so to a minister? Thou deservest thy brains beaten out." I said, "Sir, here is an evidence of what I said; for you can be angry with me for preaching righteousness by Jesus Christ; but you do not reprove this man for blaspheming the holy name of God." Then they went away, and left me to my work.

A little after, as I was at work, a man came to me, and said, he had called at a public house for a pint of ale, a little way from Birstal; and he heard the landlord offer to lay five pounds with some that were drinking, that John Nelson would be sent for a soldier before ten days were past. I replied, "The will of the Lord be done: if God permit it to be so, this also shall turn to the furtherance of the Gospel." He said, "I would have you to take care; for evil is determined against you." I answered, "I am not my own, but the Lord's: he that lays hands on me will burn his own fingers; and God will deliver me after He hath tried me."

Soon after, as I was at my work at another place, three gentlemen came to me, and one of them began to speak strongly against perfection. I gave him no answer. Then another began to talk about building, and said, "Hewing of stone is a fine art." I replied, "Sir, it was a fine art once, when there

were eighty thousand men together, so skilled in the art, that the stones were perfectly fitted for the places they were to have in the temple before they were brought off the mountain; so that when they came to Jerusalem there was not one stroke to strike at them, nor the sound of a tool heard in the building. Sir, you will allow those men to be workmen that needed not to be ashamed; for their work was perfect before it came to Jerusalem." The gentlemen said, "You are right, you are right. I will never speak against holiness being perfected in this world again: for certainly that house of God, at Jerusalem, was a type of the house eternal in the heavens; and every stone of that must be fitted perfectly for its place in this world, or it must not be admitted into that New Jerusalem." He added, "I thank you, and wish that all our preachers may so square their work after the rule of God's word, that they may not be ashamed when they come to give up their accounts to Him who is Lord of the work."

Wherever I went to preach, for ten days together, I was told that the constables had orders to press me. My answer was, "The will of the Lord be done; for the fierceness of man shall turn to His praise."

On Friday, as I was hewing stone, it was in my mind, that trouble was near at hand; but the words of Isaiah were a stay to me: "I, even I, am He that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass?" And again it came to me, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee

with the right hand of My righteousness. Behold, all they that are incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded : they shall be as nothing ; and they that strive with thee shall perish."

At night I was met, as I was going to Adwalton, by one who told me that the parson and alehouse-keepers had agreed to press me that night, and to send me away the next morning ; for the commissioners were to sit at Halifax, and they would dispatch me before I could get any one to appear in my behalf. And he said, "I would have you turn back ; for there is one alehouse-keeper that swears he will press you, if his arm rots from his shoulder." I answered, "I cannot fear ; for God is on my side, and His word hath added strength to my soul this day : and if I fall into the hands of wicked men, God shall be glorified thereby ; and when He hath proved me in the furnace, He will bring me forth as gold."

Accordingly, I went to Adwalton, and expounded, at John Booth's, to a well-behaved congregation. When I had done, Joseph Gibson, the constable's deputy, (an alehouse-keeper, who found his craft was in danger,) pressed me for a soldier. I asked him, by whose order : he said, several of the inhabitants of the town, who did not like so much preaching : and, by his own talk, it appeared they were those of his own craft, and the clergyman, who had agreed together.

He caused me to go to the White Hart, whither Mr. Charlesworth, and Mr. Holmes of Sykehouse, and several more, went with us, and Mr. Charlesworth offered £500 bail for me till the next day ; but no bail was to be taken for a Methodist (so called). He protested I should go to his house. I made no resistance, but went, and several of our

people with us ; and we sang a hymn, and prayed together, and so parted.

Next morning several people came to see me before we went from Adwalton. Here I was kept ten hours before the warrant came into his house. When the constable came, he said, if he had been there, he would have prevented what Gibson had done.

Between eight and nine I went to Birstal, to my house ; and, after I had changed my clothes, we set out for Halifax. When I was brought before the commissioners, they smiled one at another as soon as they saw me. They bade the door-keepers not to let any man come in ; but Mr. Thomas Brooks had got in with me ; and they said, "That is one of his converts." They then called Joseph Gibson, and asked, "How many men have you brought?" He said, "One." "Well, and what have you against him?" "Why, gentlemen," said he, "I have nothing to say against him, but he preaches to the people ; and some of our townsmen don't like so much preaching." They broke out in laughter ; and one of them swore I was fit to go for a soldier, for there I might have preaching enough. I said to him, "Sir, you ought not to swear." "Well," said they to me, "you have no license to preach, and you shall go for a soldier." I answered, "Sir, I have surely as much right to preach, as you have to swear." He said to the captain, "Captain, is he fit for you?" "Yes," he answered. "Then take him away."

But I said, "Here are several of my honest neighbours : you ought to give me the liberty of another man, and hear what they say of me, whether I am such a one as the warrant mentions, or not." They answered, "Here is your minister," (one of the

commissioners,) "and he has told us of your character, and we will hear no more." So I found I was condemned before the commissioners saw me.

Then Mr. Brooks laid the petitions before them, sent me by neighbouring gentlemen, which testified I had done no evil, but had behaved myself well in my neighbourhood, and had always maintained my family very well; and they desired them to set me at liberty. And Mr. Brooks said, "Gentlemen, you see he is not such a man as is mentioned in the warrant." But they made him hold his peace, and said, "You are one of his pupils, and ought to go with him." He answered, "Why do you not send me then? for you have as much right to send me as him."

Then our minister spoke and said, "Young Brooks lives with a woman of the worst character in our town." When I heard him speak against his neighbour such notorious falsehoods as these, I thought it would be to no purpose for Mr. Brooks to say any more; so I desired him to be silent. Then they read the papers sent on my behalf; and one of the company asked, if he must put them on the fire. But the answer to him by several was, "No; for if they be called for, they will make against us."

"So," said I, "gentlemen, I see there is neither law nor justice for a man that is called a Methodist; but all is lawful that is done against me. I pray God forgive you; for you know not what you do." They answered, "Surely your minister must be a better judge of you than any other man; and he has told us enough of you and your preaching." "Well," said I, "Mr. C[oleby], what do you know of me that is evil? Whom have I defrauded? Or where have I contracted a debt that I cannot pay?" He said,

" You have no visible way of getting your living." I answered, " I am as able to get my living with my hands as any man of my trade in England is, and you know it; and have I not been at work yesterday, and all the week before?" But they bade the captain take me away: so he came, and said, " We will take you off preaching soon." I answered, " You must first ask my Master's leave." But he said, " We will make you give over." I replied, " It is out of your power." Then he thrust me into a corner of the room, and said, " You shall have company presently."

Afterwards several were brought to the commissioners, and three condemned to go with me, and four or five acquitted. But all had their neighbours to speak for them except me; for what need was there of any other witness?

Glory be to God on high! He kept my soul all this time in perfect peace; and I could say to Him, from my heart,—

" Whilst Thou, O my God, art nigh,  
My soul despairs to fear;  
Sin and Satan I defy,  
Still impotently near:  
Earth and hell their wars may wage,  
Calm I mark their vain design,  
Smile to see them idly rage  
Against a child of Thine."

Then the captain read the articles to us that were condemned, and said, " You hear, your doom is death if you disobey us." I answered, " I do not fear the man that can kill me, any more than I do him who can cut down a dog-standard: for I know my life is hid with Christ in God; and He will judge between you and me one day: but I beseech Him

not to lay this sin to your charge." And to Mr. C[oleby] I said, "Sir, I pray God forgive you; for you have given me such a character as not another man in England will, that knows me."

I was greatly surprised to see men sit on the judgment-seat, and drink and swear as they did; and a man that had a commission from God to reprove all that do such things could hear and see, and yet never speak in God's cause. It made me cry out to the Lord, "Take the matter in Thy hand, O God! for righteousness is fallen in the streets, and iniquity bears rule." But I could not hear them swear but must speak to them, although they mocked at my reproof.

Then we were guarded to Halifax; but the keeper would not let us come into his jail. We were taken to the officer's quarters, and kept till six at night, where John Rhodes and Thomas Charlesworth, of Little Gomersal, came to see me, and cared for my soul, as if they had been my mother's sons. O my God, remember them for good and give them and their houses, and all that wish well to our Sion, to rejoice in the gladness of Thy people!

At six we set out for Bradford, and many of the inhabitants prayed for me, and wept to see me in the hands of unrighteous and cruel men. But I said, "Fear not: God hath His way in the whirlwind; and He will plead my cause. Only pray for me, that my faith fail not."

When we were about half way between Halifax and Bradford, one of the soldiers said to me, "Sir, I am sorry for you; for the captain is ordered by the commissioners to put you in the dungeon. But I will speak to him, and if he will let me have the care of you, you shall lie with me; for the dungeon

is as loathsome a place as ever I saw." I thanked him for his offer. But when we got to Bradford, we were drawn up in the street where the cross stood, and the captain went and fetched the people of the dungeon, and said, "Take this man, and put him into the dungeon; and take this other along with you"—(a poor harmless man, all the clothes upon whose back were not worth one shilling: neither did they lay anything to his charge, when he was ordered for a soldier). But when we came to the dungeon-door, the soldier who spoke to me by the way went to the captain, and said, "Sir, if you will give me charge over Mr. Nelson, my life for his, he shall be forthcoming in the morning." But the captain threatened to break his head if he spoke about me any more.

The captain came to us before I went down; and I asked him, "Sir, what have I done, that I must go to the dungeon? If you are afraid of me, that I should run away, set a guard over me in a room, and I will pay them." He answered, "My order is to put you in the dungeon." So I see my Lord's word is fulfilled, "The servant is not above his Master." For those who were accused of thieving, and great evils which they had done in the neighbourhood, must eat and drink, and lie on feather-beds; but I only desired a little water, and it was refused me by the captain, although I had had nothing all the day, except a little tea in the morning. But my Master never sends His servants a warfare at their own charge: He gives strength according to their day. For, when I came into the dungeon, that stunk worse than a hog-stye by reason of the blood and filth which sink from the butchers who kill over it, my soul was so filled

with the love of God, that it was a paradise to me.

Then could I cry out, "O the glorious liberty of the sons of God!" And I fell down on my knees, and gave God thanks, that He counted me worthy to be put into a dungeon for the truth's sake; and prayed that my enemies might be saved from the wrath to come, I think with as much desire as I could feel for my mother's own children. I wished they were as happy in their own houses, as I was in the dungeon.

About ten, several of the people came to the dungeon-door, and brought me some candles, and put me some meat and water in through the hole of the door. When I had eaten and drunk, I gave God thanks; and we sang hymns almost all night, they without, and I within.

The same night, a man that lives in Bradford came to the dungeon, and, though he was an enemy to the Methodists, when he smelt the ill savour of the place, he said, "Humanity moves me." He went away directly, and about eleven came again, and said, "I will assure you I am not in your way of thinking; but for all that, I have been with your captain, and offered ten pounds bail for you, and myself as prisoner, if he would let you lie in a bed; but all in vain, for I can get nothing of him but bad words. If the justice were in town, I would have gone to him, and would soon have fetched you out. But since it is as it is, I pray God plead your cause." O my God, let not him that would give a cup of cold water to Thy servants lose his reward; but do Thou bless him, and bless Thy people! And I beseech Thee to have mercy upon our enemies, and let not Thy heavy judgments fall upon them; but be Thou

glorified in their conversion, not in their destruction!

The poor man that was with me might have starved, if my friends had not brought him meat; for when our guard had locked us up, they went to their lodging, and took no more thought of us that night. Here we had not so much as a stone to sit on.

When the man and I were laid down on a little foul straw, "Pray you, sir," said he, "are all these your kinsfolk, that they love you so well? I think they are the most loving people that ever I saw in my life." I answered, "By this you may know that they are Jesus Christ's disciples; for this is the mark He Himself has given, whereby all men might know His disciples from the unbelieving world."

At four in the morning, my wife and several more came to the dungeon, and spoke to me through the hole of the door; and I said, "Jeremiah's lot is fallen upon me." Then it came to my remembrance that, when I was about thirteen or fourteen years old, I often thought, if God should make me like Jeremiah, to stand and speak His words to the people in the streets, as he did, I should not mind who cast dirt at me. And now I am, in some measure, treated as he was, for persuading men to flee from the wrath to come.

My wife said, "Fear not: the cause is God's for which you are here, and He will plead it Himself. Therefore be not concerned about me and the children; for He that feeds the young ravens will be mindful of us; He will give you strength for your day; and after we have suffered awhile, He will perfect that which is lacking in our souls, and then bring us 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.' "

So they all said that were with her at the door. I was greatly refreshed at finding my wife so strong in the faith, when she was like to be left with two children, and big with another at the same time; and said, "I cannot fear either man or devil, so long as I find the love of God as I do now; for He has cheered my heart as with sweet wine, ever since He suffered me to be cast into prison. O that I may be faithful unto death, and I shall receive the crown of life! For not one word of Jesus shall fall to the ground, till all be accomplished."

About five in the morning, they took me out, and we were guarded to Leeds, and stood in the street till ten. Hundreds flocked to see me. Some said, "It is a shame to send a man for a soldier for speaking the truth: for many of our neighbours that follow the Methodists, and were as wicked before as any people in the town, are now like new creatures; for we do not hear an ill word come out of their mouths." Others cried, "I wish they were all hanged out of the way; for they make people go mad; and we cannot get drunk, or swear, but every fool must correct us, as if we were to be taught by them. But I hope they will now be brought to nought; for that is one of the worst of them."

As I was standing, a jolly, well-dressed woman came up to me, and put her face almost to mine, and said, "Now, Nelson, where is thy God? Thou saidst at Shent's door, as thou wast preaching, thou wast no more afraid of His promise failing, than thou wast of dropping through the heart of the earth." I replied, "Look in the seventh chapter of Micah, and the 8th and 10th verses."

Just as the church began, I was guarded to the jail, and the others to the ale-house. The jail-

keeper here was very civil; for he let my friends come in several times to see me. I thought of the Pilgrim's Progress: for hundreds of people in the street stood and looked at me through the iron grate, and were ready to fight about me. Several would have given bail for me, if they would let me out; but I was told that one hundred pounds were refused, which were offered by a stranger for me. I am too notorious a criminal to be allowed such favours; for Christianity is a crime which the world can never forgive.

At night, I believe a hundred of our friends were with me in the jail together. We sang a hymn and prayed. I gave an exhortation, and we parted. But Mr. H—— was not willing that I should lie on dirty straw, and therefore sent me a bed. I find the time is not yet come for me to be hated of all men for the sake of Christ. I pray God to give me strength for that day. Glory be to His holy name, hitherto His grace is sufficient for me, and I hang upon His promise for strength in my next trials.

At five on Monday morning I was let out of jail, and we marched off for York directly. Many of our friends went with us out of the town near three miles; but when I came to take my leave, they mourned as one that had lost his first-born. I spoke comfortable words to them, and bade them "stand fast, in nothing terrified by their adversaries; which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. So the peace of God be with you all!" We came to York by three, and were brought before several of the officers, at the Black Swan, in Coney-street, who seemed to rejoice as men that had taken great spoil, and saluted me with many a grievous oath. It brought something

to my mind, which I had spoken in the fields to the Lord, when He had broken a great cloud that was on my soul, through my refusing to preach when many had desired me, and I had time, but consulted with flesh and blood, and, Jonah-like, fled from the presence of the Lord, down into a valley near the side of a wood, where God laid His hand on me, and brought my soul into such distress that I threw myself on the ground and wished for death; seeing it more agreeable to flesh and blood to be a shepherd's dog, than a preacher of the Gospel; for his hand is against every man, and every man's hand against him. But at the remembrance of the prophets, and the apostles, and Christ Himself, what contradictions and tribulations they all met with, the cloud broke, and my soul was so refreshed with the love of God, that I cried out, "My Lord and my God! Now Thou hast given me strength, forsake me not; and if Thou send me to hell to preach to devils, I am ready to go."

When I was before these officers, and heard such language, I thought hell could not be much worse than the company I was in. I asked them, "Do you believe that there is a God, and that he is a God of truth?" They said, "We do." I answered, "I cannot believe you, I tell you plainly." "Why so?" I replied, "I cannot think that any man of common understanding, who believes that God is true, dares take His name in vain; much less do you believe that God can hear you when you pray to Him to damn your souls. Now, suppose God should grant you the damnation you pray for, what miserable wretches would you be! Do you know that you must one day appear before that God who will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain?"

As I reasoned with them about a future state, they seemed to shrink as if I had thrown fire at them; but they soon put away the conviction, and said, " You must not preach here; for you are delivered to us for a soldier, and must not talk so to us who are officers." I answered, " There is but one way to prevent me." They asked, " What is that? " I replied, " It is to swear no more in my hearing."

Then we were guarded through the city; but it was as if hell were moved from beneath to meet me at my coming. The streets and windows were filled with people, who shouted and huzzaed, as if I had been one that had laid waste the nation. But the Lord made my brow like brass, so that I could look on them as grasshoppers, and pass through the city as if there had been none in it but God and myself. O that I may never offend my gracious God, or provoke Him to take His lovingkindness from me! Then, though I go through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. Even now I find His word fulfilled, where He saith, " I will deliver thee from sudden fear and from terror; for it shall not come near thee." Verily, Thou art a God of truth! O be merciful to this great city, whose streets ring with curses, and turn upon them a pure language, that their souls may be saved, and the enemy disappointed of his hope!

I was brought to the guard-house, and the officers cast lots for me, and it was Captain S— —'s lot to have me. Then they offered me money, but I refused to take it; and they bade the serjeant hand-cuff me, and send me to prison. I was guarded thither by a file of musqueteers, but not hand-cuffed, and kept two nights and part of three days; during which time, I was beset with such cursers and swearer as

could hardly be matched out of hell. So I had work enough both day and night to reprove them. I found they could not stand my words, but the most hardened among them shrunk, and wished they could leave it off, and never swear more.

Several of the townspeople came and asked me of the doctrine that the Methodists preached, "which makes their names," said they, "to be loathed by all sects and parties in the nation." My answer was, "The same doctrine it is, which made Jews and Gentiles conspire against Jesus Christ, who first preached it; and whoever he be that bears the testimony, he must meet with the same treatment. Our Lord has said, 'Ye shall be hated of all men for My sake;' and again, 'If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.' What! do you think Christ would be found a liar, and all His apostles, who tell us of the things that are done in this our day? Nay, verily, heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one word of Christ's shall fall to the ground."

When I had opened the Scriptures, and told them the fundamental points of our doctrine, they said one to another, "This people is not what the world represents them; for if this be their doctrine, there is not a man in England can contradict them." They offered me strong drink; but I told them I did not choose it. They wished me out of my enemies' hands, and left me to my company of drunkards and swearers.

I may indeed say, I have fought with beasts at York; for so these men live. Yet my speaking to them was not in vain; for they bridled their tongues in my presence, after the first twenty-four hours. When they spake any blasphemous words, if I did but turn and look them in the face, they looked like criminals before the magistrate.

The next morning, as I lay on the boards to rest me, I fell asleep, and I dreamed of Daniel in the lions' den. I was awakened by one crying, "Nelson, Nelson!" and I started up, saying, "Who wants me?" That instant three women came to the door, and brought me some food. They were entire strangers to me, and I to them; "but Thou, Lord, carest for me."

On Tuesday night, my wife and sister Mitchell came to see me, and found me lying on the boards. I said, "Behold the fruits of the Gospel! Now you see the word of God is fulfilled: 'They lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and he that turneth from evil maketh himself a prey.' But God looks down from heaven, and will plead our cause: fear not."—"No," answered they, "we do not fear; for our God is as able to deliver now, as He was seventeen hundred years ago." So they took their leave of me that night, wishing me a good repose on my wooden bed; where, thanks be to God, I slept as well as if I had been on a bed of down.

Next morning they brought me something to eat, and bade me be strong in the Lord, and not fear them that can kill the body only. My heart rejoiced to see them so steadfast in the faith.

This day a court-martial was held, and I was guarded to it by a file of musqueteers, with their bayonets fixed. When I came before the court, they asked, "What is this man's crime?" The answer was, "This is the Methodist preacher, and he refuses to take money." Then they turned to me, and said, "Sir, you need not find fault with us, for we must obey our orders, which are to make you act as a soldier; for you are delivered to us: and if you have not justice done you, we cannot help it."

My answer was, “I shall not fight; for I cannot bow my knee before the Lord to pray for a man, and get up and kill him when I have done. I know God both hears me speak and sees me act; and I should expect the lot of a hypocrite, if my actions contradict my prayers.” “Well, don’t stand preaching to us,” said they; “for we must make you obey us. Serjeant, give him some money.” He offered me two shillings, but I refused to take them. They threatened me sore; but I could not fear them at all. “Well,” said they, “if you run away, you are as liable to suffer as if you had taken our money.” I answered, “If I cannot be discharged lawfully, I shall not run away: if I do, punish me as you please.” Then they ordered the serjeant to go to quarters with me. He took me to the Wild Man, in Peter-gate; where the people behaved well to me, though they had eight more quartered upon them. They said, “It is a pity you should come among such a wicked crew as these we have; for there are but few like them in the world.” They ordered me a room and a bed to myself. Blessed be God, who gives me favour in the sight of the Egyptians! These people were professed Papists, who, I might imagine, would show no more mercy to a man that preaches salvation by faith, than they would do to a mad dog. Yet I see it is not the man that makes the Christian, but the mind which was in Christ; and whosoever hath this mind in him, he is a Christian, let the world call him what it will.

I came to Margaret Townshend’s, and met with my wife and sister Mitchell, who rejoiced to see my feet once more out of the prison. We sang praises to God for His great mercies to me at this time, and passed the afternoon in encouraging each other.

Next morning, I sent them out of town, and went, as I was ordered, to parade at the Blue Boar, in Castle-gate ; where the officers ordered Corporal W—— to fetch me a gun and other warlike instruments. The corporal seemed to shudder at the task, but was forced to obey ; and when he brought them and was girding them about me, he trembled as if he had the palsy.

I asked, “Why do you gird me with these warlike habiliments ? for I am a man averse to war, and shall not fight, but under the Prince of Peace, the Captain of my salvation ; and the weapons He gives me are not carnal like these.” “Well,” said they, “but you must bear these, till you can get your discharge.” “As you put them on me,” I answered, “I will bear them as a cross, and use them as far as I can, without desiling my conscience ; but that I will not do for any man on earth.”

The officers bade them march us off to Hiepworth-Moor, to learn the exercise of a soldier ; but Corporal W—— seemed as tender to me as if he had been my own father, and carried the gun for me to the field. And when he came to teach me their exercise, his heart seemed to fail him, and he bade me lay down the gun, and we fell into discourse. I found he had the fear of God before his eyes, and the Lord had shown him the light of His countenance. But he was as a sparrow alone on the house-top : none cared for his conversation ; but they all despised him, because he would not get drunk and swear as they did. O my God, remember him for good always, I beseech Thee !

Next day I was ordered to the field, and others must teach me the warlike exercise, who also behaved civilly to me. I had more to see me than all

the rest; and it caused the truth to break out the more, and removed prejudice from many. I found the people at York looked upon one that is called a Methodist as one who had the plague, and infects all whom he comes near; and they blessed God that none had come to preach there.

But if I was bound, the word of God was not bound; for if any blasphemed, I reproved them, whether rich or poor, and fell into many disputes with them: and God gave me words, such as they could not resist. My discourses had such an effect on them, that they said, they wished Mr. Wesley would come and preach there. I gave them several of our little books. So, by hearing and reading, they found out the doctrine to be only the plain word of God. And now several attended my coming to the field; not to see me, as before, but to ask questions, and to know of "the new doctrine," as some were pleased to call it. Surely, by all these things shall the Gospel be spread. The Lord is in the tempest, and it shall turn to His glory. Satan doth but whet a knife to cut his own throat.

One day, as I was talking to the people, a man came and feigned himself to be concerned about his soul. As he was coming, it was impressed upon my mind that he was a deceiver. As soon as he approached, I said, "You are a wicked man, and Satan hath sent you with a lie in your mouth; but God will not be mocked." He went away as one condemned. Before he had gone one hundred yards, he fell down, and broke a limb, and dislocated his shoulder. Then he roared like a bear, saying, "It is a just judgment from God on me"—and desired me to pray for him.

On Sunday, the 13th, I went to Coney-street

church, and the Lord manifested Himself to me in great love at the sacrament. At night, Hannah Scholefield and I, with our brother Houghton from Manchester, and two or three more, went out into the fields, thinking to retire ; but some had seen us, and told others that we were going to sing hymns. In a few minutes we had near a hundred to keep us company. We sang two hymns, and I gave them an exhortation. They received my word with meekness, and wished to hear me again.

We went a mile another way ; but there were people walking there also, who, knowing me, flocked to us, and desired to hear what sort of doctrine it was which caused all men to hate us. I said, "It is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which made all men hate Him ; and ye are sensible our great Shepherd said, 'Ye shall be hated of all men for My sake.'" But they said, "This is a Christian land, and it is not so now." "Well," said I, "then you must say the Gospel is not an everlasting Gospel, or you declare us blessed, and almost all the people in England cursed." They said, "What, do you point the blessings to you, and the curse to all the rest ? We think it is the other way." "Then," said I, "you do not think as Christ speaks ; for He said, 'Blessed are ye when all men speak evil of you, and hate you for My sake, and the Gospel's : rejoice, and be exceeding glad ; for so they did to the prophets of old. But woe unto you when all men speak well of you ; for so they spake of the false prophets.'" Upon this they were silent, but wished they could hear me themselves, as they then should be better able to judge. By this time a great company were come together, desiring to hear me ; and God gave me to speak plainly, and to their hearts. When I

had done, several of them said they would go ten miles to hear such another discourse. The prejudice seemed taken out of their minds at a stroke ; and they cried, "This is the doctrine which ought to be preached, let men say what they will against it."

As we came back, one of our company said, "I wonder the devil cannot perceive, that this striving to suppress the Gospel is like striving to quench the fire by casting oil upon it. As God spake, so it is, I see, this day. His servants are like brands of fire cast into dry stubble. Surely God will be glorified in your captivity : only let us watch and pray, that the enemy get no advantage over us."

The day following I went as before to exercise, when many came to talk with me, some to dispute, and some who earnestly desired to be saved. Among the disputers was a clergyman. I knew him ; for I had seen him in his gown threce days before. When several who appeared as gentlemen disputed hotly against all the power of religion, I showed them from the articles, homilies, and prayers of our own Church, that those who speak as they did, were no members of the Church of England ; for to be a real member of Christ's church, is to feel Christ in us,—to know that He died for His church, and that by His death we are delivered from death eternal,—to find that Spirit which raised Him from the dead, raising us from the death of sin, that our bodies may be the undefiled temples of the living God, a holy habitation of God, through His Spirit dwelling in us. For as many as have the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God ; and if any man have not the Spirit of God, he is none of His. "Nay, if you know not," I added, "that Christ is in you, you are now in a state of reprobation." "So," said they, "you have

condemned us all at a stroke." I answered, "I have condemned no man; for I have not spoken my own, but the words of God; as I appeal to your consciences, you that have ever read the Scriptures."

When they were put to silence, the minister began to explain the Spirit of God out of the Word, as what could not be felt or perceived at all, neither was it necessary, now we had the Scriptures to go by. I said, "It is highly necessary, if the Scriptures be true; for they tell me, if I have not the Spirit of Christ, I am none of His; and if I am not His, I must belong to the devil, for they two share the world between them. Besides, if there be no such thing as receiving the Holy Spirit now-a-days, as you say, then he who repeats the prayers of the Church offers to God the sacrifice of fools." Here he stormed at me, and called me an enthusiast, and said, "To talk of the Spirit is all a delusion." "Hold, sir," I replied, "or I shall expose you before the people, which I did not design to do. How could you affirm, before God and the congregation, that you were inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit to take upon you the office of a deacon; and now testify there is no such thing as being moved by the Holy Spirit?" He said, "Did I say so?" "Yes, sir," I answered, "you did, when you received holy orders." He turned pale, spake not ten words more, but went away. I have met him several times since, and he speaks kindly to me.

I had some every day to dispute with me, and every night some to converse with me, who wanted to know the way to Zion. The people now cried out, "When will Mr. Wesley come? for here are thousands in this town that would gladly hear him." Indeed I found a great desire in them to know the

way of salvation ; yea, and they seemed willing to be saved in God's own way ; that is, *from* their sins, not *in* them. Surely the Lord will be mindful of them, and give them teachers after His own heart !

The second Sunday I went to church, and my heart was comforted again by the love of God in the sacrament. God, I find, will meet with us in His own ways. O may we never forsake them !

This week several of the brethren came to see me, and we were comforted together. Our brother Ash brought me some little books, which I gave to the people who came to see me ; so that, by my speaking and their reading, many began to be alarmed, and sent for me to their houses to inquire, "How can these things be, which you affirm ? For if these things are as you say, and Mr. Wesley has here written, then we are not Christians." I told them, "I will prove those things to be true, both from our own Church and the written word of God ; and if you find you have not these inward marks of faith, such as peace, joy, love, and the witness of the Spirit, you are no Christians yet. But that is no reason why you should not become such : for Christ has commanded repentance and remission of sins to be preached to every soul in His name ; and He doth actually pardon and absolve all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel. Therefore seek, and you shall find ; for the truth of God binds Him to give to every one that asketh."

The people attended my going into the field all this week ; and when I went along the streets, they came out of their houses to stare at me, as if I had been a monster. I have read that they would not suffer any to buy or sell in the city, unless they had the mark of the beast ; but here, without his

mark, we cannot so much as pass the streets. O my God, why is Thy servant as a speckled bird in this which is called a Christian country!—called after Thy most sacred name; which whosoever nameth must depart from iniquity! How is the faithful city become a harlot, and Thy people taken captive by the enemy at his will! It is for Thee, Lord, to lay to Thine hand; for they have destroyed Thy law!

One day this week, after my exercise on the moor, there came a gentleman in gold lace, and a minister in disguise, and began asking me questions; which I answered according to the ability God gave me. Many flocked round about us to hear: for our dispute was long, and hot on their side. I believe we had talked half an hour before I perceived he was a minister; for I took him for a lawyer, and such an one as believed there was no God! For if I spake of the Scripture, he threw up his head, and called me a fool, and bade me hold my nonsense. I said, "That which you call nonsense, I call the highest wisdom." When I spake anything of the Spirit of God, he heaved his cane at me as if he would have struck me; but God gave me perfect ease in my soul, and words which made him start, and convinced the bystanders of the truth. He was so enraged, that he foamed at the mouth like a horse that is hard ridden.

But when I understood that he was a minister, I said, "Hold, sir; let me speak a little, by your leave. You call yourself a minister of the Church of England, do you not?" "I do." "Pray then, sir, what doctrine do you preach? For you make the word of God of none effect, and you deny all inspiration." He replied, "So I do deny all inspiration." "How dare you then pray for the

inspiration of God's Spirit, when you do not believe there is any such thing?" When he had raged awhile, he said, "I believe you have read the book of Job, and made it all your own." I answered, "I have need of patience, who have men of such principles as you to talk with, that regard not what they say to provoke one; but I thank God, you have not done it yet." He replied, "My reason for speaking so is, because you cannot be quiet with your nonsense and inspiration. And I hear you have preached several times since you came, and have filled the heads of many in this town with your new doctrine." I told him, I had not preached publicly since I came, but did not know how soon I might. Then he shook his stick, stamped, and said in anger, "If you do preach publicly, we shall take an order with you, which shall be worse than sending you for a soldier." "Let God look to that," I answered; "for by His grace I can love all men, but fear none that can kill the body only. I assure you, it is not the fear of man which shall hinder me from preaching; for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." When he began to calm a little, I asked him, "Sir, suppose you had been inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit to preach the Gospel: if the outward ordination were refused you, when you believed yourself called according to the will of Christ to preach, would you forbear preaching? that is, would you obey man or God?" "I suppose," said he, "you think you have put a hard question to me." But, hard or easy, he never answered; and I cannot remember that I ever saw him since. Just as he went away, he challenged me to go into a room with him; but I said, "I have done fighting, sir."

On Saturday, several desired me to preach on

Sunday morning. I told them I should take a walk out to the moor, at half an hour after seven. Accordingly, I did so, and found thrice as many as I expected, and preached to about three hundred well-behaved people, who entreated me to preach to them again at night. I answered some of them, I did not know but I might: yet I gave no public notice; but one told another, and it spread through the city.

I went to the Minster, and heard the bishop preach, and received the blessed sacrament at his hands. At seven in the evening I went to the moor, and found an unexpected congregation; I believe six thousand people. But there was nothing prepared for me to stand on; and great part of the soldiers were there almost drunk, and began to quarrel with the people that crowded about me; so that I saw there was likely to be mischief done, and prevented it by withdrawing. If I had preached, I believe they would have behaved very quietly; for they seemed to have a great desire to hear what this doctrine was. I had not the opportunity of satisfying them at this time; but they that heard in the morning told others, and inflamed them the more with a desire to hear for themselves. Several sent for me to their houses, and others came to me: so I see God will work, and who shall hinder? Lord, open their understanding, that they may know the things which belong to their everlasting peace!

On Monday I heard that some clergymen were with the officers; and, at night, one of the officers sent for me, and said, "What, you cannot leave off preaching yet; but we must be blamed about you. But if ever you preach publicly again, you shall be severely whipped." My answer was, "I am not careful in this matter. It is better to obey God

than man ! I believe it is the will of God that I should preach : and I have not taken man to please in anything that will offend my God."

With many threats, he bade me go : but I made no promise to obey him ; neither did I intend it in this case ; for I had promised to go to Acomb, a village about a mile out of York. The next evening, accordingly, I went, and preached to almost all the inhabitants, in a field. The Lord gave me to speak His word freely, and sent it with power to their hearts : the rock was struck, and the water gushed out. All whom I saw, behaved well. Many said, " We hope you will come again ; for, let men say what they will of this people, this is the truth, and so we shall find it one day."

As I came down the street, an alderman and his wife, of York, who had been to hear me, were standing at the gate of his house, and he called me, and said, " If you please to accept of a glass of any sort of liquor which my house affords, it is at your service." I answered, " I thank you for your good-will, but I don't care to drink." Several others offered me drink, but I took none. They prayed me to come once a week, as long as I stayed in York. Lord, be mindful of this people, I beseech Thee ; and send them those who will preach righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ ! And O that they may be found with the wedding-garment on in that day when every covering which is not of Thy Spirit will be found as filthy rags before Thy pure eyes !

All that week I had company as much as I could tell what to do with. Several desired me to preach on Sunday morning. I did not promise, but went to discourse with about a score, at seven, on the moor. Others had a suspicion of my being there ;

and I believe two hundred flocked round me, as soon as they saw me walking, and begged me to preach to them. I told them I stood in jeopardy if I did; but they answered, "We are more in danger than you, for our souls are in danger;" on which it came into my mind that I had freely received, and I ought freely to give. I therefore preached to them; and God was with us of a truth, and the hearts of the people were opened to receive the word in love.

Thence I went to sister Townshend's, where I found my own brother, and brother Mitchell, who came to see me; and we were comforted together. Our time was short; for I had but half an hour before I had to answer for what I had done. Somebody had told the ensign that I had been preaching: so he sent for me, and said, "D—n your blood, sir, have you been preaching this morning?" I told him I had; on which he swore he would have no preaching nor praying in the regiment. "Then, sir," said I, "you ought to have no swearing or cursing, neither; for surely I have as much right to pray and preach, as you have to curse and swear."

He swore again that I should be damnably whipped for what I had done. I answered, "Let God look to that: the cause is His. But if you do not leave off your cursing and swearing, it will be worse with you than with me." Then he said, "Corporal, put this fellow into prison directly." The corporal said, "Sir, I must not carry a man to prison, unless I give in his crime with him." "Well," said he, "it is for disobeying orders." So I see a hundred may disobey all the orders of God, and there is no notice taken of them; nor do the common people cry out, "Hang them out of the way;" but if one of a thousand begins to reprove them for sin,

they hale him to prison, as if he had killed father or mother. But so it was from the beginning ; for a murderer was preferred before the Prince of Life.

I was put prisoner just as the church service began ; and I sent a man to tell my brother that the word of God was fulfilled,—“Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried,”—and desired their prayers, that I might be faithful unto death. As soon as I was within the prison, my heart was filled with joy unspeakable, and my mouth with praise to my gracious Redeemer. This also shall turn to the glory of God ; for several men of good report heard me this morning, and testified that I had spoken the truth ; and they would not, they said, be guilty of sending that man to prison for preaching, for all the world. This caused many to come to me, who offered me wine and strong drink. I told them I did not care for any sort of strong liquor ; but such as I had, I gave unto them, —some little books, and the word of God, which He gave me plentifully to speak to them, without respect to any man’s person.

Two nights, and near three days, I was kept prisoner at this time ; during which, my soul was as a watered garden, and I could sing praises to God all day long ; for He turned my captivity into joy, and gave me to rest as well on the boards, as if I had been on a bed of down. Now could I say, “God’s service is perfect freedom ;” and I was carried out much in prayer, that my enemies might drink of the same river of peace which my God gave so largely to me.

Now did I more plainly see the dreadful state of the unconverted than ever ; and thought, if it might be the conversion of my enemies, I could be content

that they should tread me under their feet. But God only knows how it would have been, had I been so tried ; yet thus far He hath helped me, and hath given me strength for my day. Indeed, I have found Him a God of truth, as far as I have tried Him ; and I put forth the hand of my faith, to lay hold on His strength, for what He shall next call me to.

On Tuesday I was fetched out, and brought before the major. There were several of the young officers with him, who smiled when I came into the room ; for they had been several times to see me in prison, and had sworn I should be severely whipped. But I told them, “ If you do not repent and leave off that swearing, you will perish eternally : and I shall be a witness against you ; and that will be worse than your whipping me for Christ’s sake.”

Now they seemed to rejoice, as if their words were going to be fulfilled. The major called, “ John Nelson : what were you put into prison for ? ” “ For warning people to flee from the wrath to come,” I answered : “ and, if this be a crime, I shall commit it again, unless you cut my tongue out ; for it is better to die than disobey God.” “ Well, but if that be all,” he replied, “ it is no crime ; for when you have done your duty, I do not care if you preach every night in a house, or any private place out of the town. But I would not have you make any mobs.” “ That,” said I, “ is far from my design.” “ Well,” said he, “ you may go home to your quarters : and, if I have a convenient time, I will send for you, and hear you myself ; for I wish all men were like you.” Here my adversaries hung down their heads, and gave off smiling.

As I went to sister Townshend’s, I heard that we were to leave York on Thursday, at four in the

morning, and march to Sunderland. I had a great desire to see my wife first; but she did not get my letter soon enough. Many of the people came, and said, "We are sorry you are going so soon from York: but, if you get your liberty, we hope both you and Mr. Wesley will come; for we have need of such plain dealing, and thousands in this city would be glad to hear. You see what a populous, wicked place it is. Pray do not forget us, but think of us when you see us not. We expected some of you two or three years ago; but you had no regard for our souls, till God brought you by force. Surely you were not sold hither, but sent for our good: therefore forget us not."

O the tenderness which this people showed, and desire for the word of God! It moved me to cry out, "Lord, have mercy on them, and let them hear Thy Gospel, and find it Thy power unto salvation! For why should Thy people perish for lack of knowledge?"

On Thursday morning we stood two hours in the streets, before we set out of town. We marched to Easingwold that day; and when we were drawn up in the street, the people perceived me to be the Methodist preacher they had read of in the newspapers. They told one another, and flocked about me, as if the soldiers had brought a monster into the town.

When we had stayed near an hour in the street, I and five more were billeted at one house, where the people were so poor they had not six seats for us to sit on, nor any beds: so we came back to the officers' quarters, and they ordered four of us to another house.

God gave me to speak plainly to them, and

several of their neighbours who came to see the Methodist. And then they said, "If this be the Methodist doctrine, we pray God we may have it preached in this town; for hundreds would be glad to hear you."

In the evening the head man of the town came in. He was a professed Papist, but was a moral, honest man, and bore a good character in his neighbourhood. He asked me many questions, and God enabled me to answer him to his satisfaction. Indeed, I never saw a man of his rank so teachable and humble: his gold lace did not make him above listening to the Gospel: he seemed a man of sound reason, as well as of a liberal education. I spoke near an hour to prove the doctrine of justification by faith, and that both from the Old and the New Testament. I showed the fruits of that justifying faith, and the necessity of every man's having it, that he may escape the damnation of hell. The word had such an effect upon him, that his eyes betrayed the tenderness of his heart; and when I ended, he said, "I think no man in his senses would dare to hinder you from instructing sinners in the way of salvation. For my own part, I shall be glad to see you at liberty; and if you get clear of these men, and come again this way, I would have you call on me."

I was amazed to find such a man among the Papists, having met with very few, either teachers or hearers, of our own Church, but what hold Popish principles ten times stronger than this man, who calls himself a Papist. When he went away, he forced two shillings into my hand, which I would have returned, telling him I received no money, and needed none; but he would not take it again, saying

he could afford it, and I might have occasion for them on my journey. O God, be merciful to him that gives a cup of cold water to Thy servants !

Next morning at two the drum beat for us to march out of the town. By eleven on Friday we got to North-Allerton, and by twelve settled in quarters. I went into the market-place, and spoke to those I found there, of the way of salvation ; I hope, not in vain. Afterwards, as I was sitting alone, there came a shopkeeper, who said, if I would go to his house, he would give me a glass of any liquor I pleased to drink. I told him I did not drink any strong liquor. " Well but," said he, " I desire your company, if you please, for half an hour." I went to his house, and drank tea with him and his family, and spake plainly to them. They received my exhortation with thankfulness, and said, " We have heard much of you, but never heard any of you before. Several of you have passed through this town, and we wondered they have never preached here. If you come again, we hope you will call and see us." I gave them a book, and returned to my quarters.

Next morning at one the drum beat for us to march, and we got to Darlington by nine. Here I was known to several, and by them made known to almost all the town. Many came to my quarters to talk with me ; and others sent for me. Whence this famine in the land ? I find the people hunger after the word, as if there were no Bibles in the nation.

We rested here on Sunday, and I had many to see me. When they heard what our doctrine was, they cried, " It is a shame to send a man for a soldier for speaking the truth : for, let all men say what they will, this is the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

In the evening, one of the officers came to me, and said, "Well, sir, why were you not at church to-day?" I answered, "I was, sir; and if you had been there, you might have seen me; for I never miss going when I have an opportunity." "Well, sir," he added, "have you preached since you came hither?" "Not publicly yet," I replied. He swore he wished I would, that he might punish me severely. "But, sir," I told him, "if you do not repent and leave off that habit of swearing, you will be worse punished than you are able to punish me." He replied, "I will make you mind your fire-lock, and leave off your preaching." "Yes, sir," I answered, "when I leave off speaking."

This was he that put me in prison at York for preaching. As Saul hunted David, so has this man hunted my soul: but, I trust, the same God that delivered David, will deliver me from cruel men. He called for one of the soldiers, from whose hat he took the cockade, and putting it in mine, swore he would make me wear it. This caused a sore temptation to arise in me, to think that an ignorant wicked man should thus torment me in the street and prison, and I was able to tie his head and heels together. I found an old man's bone in me; but the Lord lifted up a standard, when anger was coming in like a flood, else I should have wrung his neck to the ground, and set my foot upon him; which would have brought a reproach upon the Gospel, and wounded my own soul. But God is good to me; for He showed me the danger, and delivered me from it in a moment. Then I could look upon him with pity, and pray for him from the ground of my heart. I gave several books away in this town also; which we left the next morning.

I was much surprised at the good nature of the soldiers in all this march; for I believe twenty offered to carry the gun for me, or anything else I had. God, I found, supported me wonderfully in all these trials; for I could travel fifteen or twenty miles fasting, as well as those who ate and drank two or three times by the way. Surely man doth not live by bread alone; but the Lord is the strength of Israel, the Defender of all them that put their trust in Him. O God, be Thou my guide unto death!

We got to Durham by nine on Monday; but, in our way, we had a river to cross, and were obliged to wade through it. The day was very hot; so that I had sweat much, and caught cold immediately. I found myself much out of order when we got to Durham, and desired I might lie down a little. Corporal W. lay down with me, and fell asleep. At twelve I awoke suddenly, as if some man had called me, and said to the corporal, "I must go to the market-place directly, for what I know not, neither which way to go to it." "Nor I," he said; "but I will go with you, and we can inquire the way." Accordingly, we did; and just as we got thither, my brother Westall was inquiring for me among the soldiers. "Well," said Mr. W., "I never saw such a thing in my life, that you should thus awake, and come to meet your friend the minute he came to seek for you."

We were much comforted together. He told me that Mr. John Wesley would be at Durham soon after four o'clock. I gave God thanks for that news. We went to a common about a mile from the town, and there we met Mr. Wesley. My heart rejoiced to see him; and great reason have I to give God thanks that I ever saw him, who was an instrument

in God's hand of plucking me as a brand out of the fire. And I have found him God's messenger for my good ever since.

We came to the sign of the Angel, and had some conversation together. He exhorted me to watch and pray; and did not doubt but my captivity would turn to the glory of God, and the furtherance of the Gospel. At six I went to answer my call, and Mr. Wesley went into the Minster.

Afterwards I and Thomas Beard, my fellow-prisoner, met Mr. Wesley, and our brother Errington, and went with them to the inn, and stayed till nine. Mr. Wesley said, "Brother Nelson, lose no time; speak and spare not; for God hath work for you to do in every place where your lot is cast: and when you have fulfilled His good pleasure, He will break your bonds in sunder, and we shall rejoice together." When we had prayed together, we commended each other to the grace of God, and so parted in body, but not in spirit.

Next morning the drum beat at one, and we were called up in the market-place, and caused to stand till three, and then marched off for Sunderland, which we reached by nine. When we were brought up into the town, I heard several of the inhabitants say one to another, "That is the Methodist mentioned in the newspapers; for his look is not like other men's." O my God, why am I and my fellows become men that are wondered at?

While we stood, a landlord came to us, and said, "Sir, I wish you would quarter at my house; for I expect two, and shall be glad to have you for one, and whom you choose for a comrade." I chose Corporal W., and asked for a billet, as the man desired, but could not get it; yet I believe we got

the best quarters we could in Sunderland. Thus I see, if we acknowledge God in all our ways, He will direct our paths.

When I went to exercise, many came to see me, and I fell into discourse with them, but could get no hold on them; for they assented and consented to all I said, and were so full of what the world calls good manners, that all I spake was written as on the sand, though I talked with them several days. Yet some, I trust, will be mindful of their everlasting welfare.

On Saturday night I was ordered to stand sentry on the Sunday following; but I desired I might stand another day, or pay for my guard. I believe ten men offered to stand for me, but all in vain; for the ensign, who had showed hatred against me all along, was the officer of the guard that day; and he protested he would make me do it myself. I asked, "Sir, what have I done, that I cannot have the same liberty as another man?" He answered, "You love the church too well; and I will keep you from it, and make them go who do not like to go!" Keep me, O my God, from all anger, or ill-will! for this man is set to prove me. I went to the guard-house, and many came to talk with me; but I did not stand sentry till six on Monday morning. The ensign saying in the street, I should not go to church, because I loved it, drew many of the people to me; and will turn, I am persuaded, to the furtherance of the Gospel.

The week after Mr. M. came. He had heard what the ensign had done, and came to me, and asked me how I did; and said, "I am informed Mr. A. hindered you from going to church; but, I will assure you, you shall not be hindered again as long as you

are with us." I have found something of good in this man ever since I knew him. He will hear reason, and seems to make a conscience both of his words and actions. I was near an hour in his chamber, and he askcd me of the principal points of our doctrine. I made them as plain to him as I could; and he heard me with great candour, and said, he had no fault at all to find with it. He told me, "The first time that ever I saw you, I saw you were no vagrant, but it would be a scandal to all who were concerned in sending or receiving such a one; for the Act of Parliament does not reach such as you. But the rest of the officers said they could not help it; for you were delivered to us as a soldier by the justices, and they are the rogues." "No, sir," I answered, "the justices are in no fault; for I was never before one of them yet." He said, "Who sent you then?" I replied, "The commissioners." "What evidence had they against you?" "The accusation against me by the constable's deputy was, 'He preaches to the people; ' and he also confessed that he knew no other evil of me." "Well, but the Act of Toleration clears you from that being a crime. What, had you no man to speak for you?" "Yes, several were ready; but none were suffered to do it. Neither were the papers regarded, which my honest neighbours, and some gentlemen, sent on my behalf; for one of the commissioners was the parson of our parish, and he was the evidence against me, and they said they would hear no other."

"Nay," said Mr. M., "it is no wonder they treated you so, if the priest was concerned; for they have been at the head of all persecutions for religion which have been since the world began. I see them so wicked, that I do not mind religion at all. But

this is my religion : I believe there is one God, and that Christ His Son died for the world ; I strive to do honestly to all men ; and to do a good turn to the meanest, if I can. And I think my religion is better than theirs, who preach one thing and do another; for I have seen so much of them, that, I assure you, I would hear you as soon as any in the land."

He said he should like to read some of our books : so I made him a present of "An Earnest Appeal," "The Character of a Methodist," and the sermon, "Awake, thou that sleepest." He has since told me, that he has read them, and likes them well.

This day he procured me a furlough to Newcastle, for seven days : and I found I did not go up without the Lord ; for my soul and those of the people were refreshed with the love of God. Several of the soldiers came to hear me preach, and gave great attention to the things which were spoken. I found great freedom to speak to the children whom God has called out of the evil world to serve Him in this place. Watch over them, O my God, for good ; and be Thou their guide unto death !

On Tuesday my time was out to go back. I preached at Painshaw, in the afternoon, to an attentive congregation, and got to Sunderland by seven at night. This week I received a letter from Mr. Charles Wesley, stating, that the E[arl] of S[tair] had assured Lady Huntingdon that I should be set at liberty in a few days. I said, "The Lord hath not forgotten to be gracious ; for He hath taken my cause in hand, and it shall turn to His glory ; for He alone hath done the work, when all human means seems to fail." My enemies cried, "We have made his bonds strong, and none can deliver him out of our snare ; for we have put it out of the officers'

power to discharge him for any price." Lord, I beseech Thee, open their eyes, and let them see the snare which Satan hath made for their souls, and escape by speedy repentance, and faith in Thy blood.

This week I was much out of health by the surfeit I got in marching; but found present ease by being bled. The week following I was sent for by the captain to the store-house; and he insisted on my going, though I was so ill. When I came there, he and three more officers came and asked me how I did: I told them; and they said, "Here is a good coat for you, to keep you from the cold, that you may recover your health." I said, "I have coats enough, if that will do: I need none of yours." They said, they would make me wear it, and all other clothing belonging to a soldier. I answered, "You may array me as a man of war, but I shall never fight." They asked me, "What is your reason?" My answer was, "I cannot see anything in this world worth fighting for. I want neither its riches nor honours, but the honour that cometh from God only; I regard neither its smiles nor its frowns; and have no business in it, but to get well out of it."

Then they ordered the serjeant to pull off my coat, and put a red one on me. When he had done it, they turned me round and rejoiced over me. I said, "You see the Scripture cannot be broken, where it saith, 'If they do this in the green tree, what will they do in the dry?'" "What do you mean by that?" they asked. I answered, "The soldiers took Jesus, and stripped Him, and put a scarlet robe upon Him, and mocked Him, as you have treated me, His servant, this day, for speaking His words. He, indeed, hath the greater condemnation who delivered

me into your hands ; but I pray God forgive you all." These words turned their countenances and behaviour towards me, and one of them laboured much from that time to find some way for me to be set at liberty.

During my three weeks' illness many of the brethren and sisters from Newcastle, Biddick, and Painshaw came to see me ; and God was pleased at that time to give some the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins, and to comfort all our hearts with His love. O may we ever keep His commandments, that we may continue in His love ; even as he kept His Father's commandments, and continued in His love !

On Friday, July 27th, John Graham, of Sunderland, came to me with an open letter in his hand, and said, "Come, my friend, I have good news for thee : God hath heard the prayers of His people in thy behalf, and sent thee deliverance. Here, read this letter, which the major hath sent to the captain on thy account." It was on this wise : "I have received an order from the Earl of S[tair] to discharge John Nelson, who was pressed from Birstal, the West Riding of Yorkshire : therefore take the arms and clothing from him, which he has received, and let me know if he has had any pay since he came, and send him to me with a furlough." Accordingly I delivered all things I had belonging to them to Lieutenant M., who said he was glad that I was released, and wished me well wheresoever I went. I had a furlough given me, and set out in the afternoon with some that were come from Newcastle to see me ; and got there by seven.\*

\* "This injured man was not set at liberty because of any acknowledged injustice or illegality in his impressment. He was

All the Society gave God thanks on my behalf, as soon as they saw me; for they had knowledge of my deliverance before I had. Next morning I went to the major's quarters about nine. When I had waited about an hour, I was ordered to come at half an hour past eleven. I did so, and waited another hour: then the major called to me, and bade me come at half an hour after two, and he would speak to me. I came again as he ordered me; and when I had stayed near an hour, one of the captains called to me, and said, "The major is gone to dine with the mayor of the town, and you will hardly see him to-night; but you will be sure to find him t -morrow morning." I told him, that would not do for me; for my business was not to be done on the Sabbath.

Near six in the evening, I saw the major going along the street, and followed him to his lodgings. He said, "I have an order from Lord S. to discharge you." He sent for the adjutant, and ordered him to bring two printed discharges with him. He came, and three more of the officers with him, and filled up the discharge. When he had done, he said, "I wish all the men in our regiment would behave as well as Mr. Nelson has done since he has been amongst us: it would be better for us and them too." Then our lieutenant said, "Indeed he has done

liberated by a substitute, who was hired to take his place, the money being, in all probability, contributed by the Methodists of London, at the instigation of Mr. Charles Wesley; who says in his Journal, under date of June 6th, 1744, 'Toward the end of my discourse, at the chapel, Mr. Erskine was sent to receive a soldier, brought by William Sheut to redceme John Nelson. He immediately took him to Lord Stair, and got a discharge for John Nelson. Our brother Downes also we received out of the mouth of the lion. Our prayers return thick upon us.'—"Life of Charles Wesley," vol. i., p. 385, edit. 1841.

much good since he came among us: for we have not had one-third of the cursing and swearing in the regiment which we had before he came: and he has given me several private exhortations, and some of their books; and I thank him for them, and for his advice, for they are good.” Then the major said, “I wish I had a regiment of such men as he is in all respects, save that one, his refusing to fight: I would not care what enemy I had to meet, or where my lot was cast.” “Sir, if you fear God,” I said, “you have no need to fear anything else: for they that fear Him, depart from evil, and seek to do His will, and not their own; they know, that in His hand are the issues of life and death; therefore, they fear not him that can kill the body only, but Him who can destroy both body and soul in hell. And every one that has this fear is truly wise; but he that dare commit sin, his wisdom is the foolishness of folly; for he is pulling destruction on his own head, and fitting himself as fuel for hell-fire. But he that is wise unto salvation is bold as a lion, and is more noble than to contend for the honour which cometh of men; for, having bread to eat, and raiment to put on, he knows he has all this world can afford him. He pities the great ones of the earth who feed on husks, and can be content with the title of right honourable, while, by sin, they debase themselves even down to hell: but by these things the god of this world blinds their eyes, so that very few of them see the way to heaven, as it is pointed out in the word of God.”

“Well,” said the major, “if you be so scrupulous about fighting, what must we do?” I answered, “It is your trade; and if you had a better, it might be better for you.” “But somebody,” he replied,

"must fight." I said, "If all men lived by faith in the Son of God, wars would be at an end." "That is true," he answered: "if it were so, we should learn war no more."

"But there is one thing," said he, "I desire to know: tell me, do you make your sermons ready before you go to preach, or do you speak off-hand?" "I do not study what to say, but speak as the Spirit of God enables me." "Well," said he, "I cannot tell what you mean by the Spirit of God." "The more is the pity," I answered, "that you should have lived so long in the world, and know nothing of God yet. For we do not know God but by His own Spirit given unto us; and till we have received that Spirit, we are without God in the world: and no man can have this gift, and not know it; for thus saith the Lord Jesus, 'At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.' So that, if God be true, we must know that Christ is in us, or we are none of His. 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God: but if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His,'—he is no Christian, no more than a Turk or Pagan, unless he has the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, to raise him in this world from the death of sin."

Here one of the captains spake: "You said, one day, 'If we have not the Spirit of God, we are dead while we live.'" "Did I so?" "Yes, you did." "Then I will prove it, both from the doctrine of the Church of England, (of which I profess myself a member,) and from the word of God." God gave me to speak plainly from both for about twenty minutes; none contradicting me, but they both stood as dumb men.

Then the major said, "Here is such a discharge for you as I never gave before, but once;" and put it into my hand. I told them, "I have now delivered my own soul, and am pure from the blood of you all: for I have not spared either poor or rich, since I came among you, but have set life and death before you all, as you came in my way. I have declared unto you, that the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God; and contrariwise, the blessed state of them that repent, and obey the Gospel of Christ our Saviour: and I pray God to give you all to understand the things which belong to your everlasting peace, and bless you in turning every one of you from your iniquities; then shall we meet another day to part no more." The major said, "I wish you well wherever you go: for I believe you Methodists are a well-meaning people;" and so said they all. I gave them a book, and took my leave of them.

I went to the room, and preached that night, and had several of the soldiers to hear me, who gave attention to what I said. Then I took my leave of them; but some of them wept, and desired me to pray for them, and said, "We are glad you are set at liberty, but sorry to part with you." I commended them to God, and the word of His grace, and trust they will mind the exhortation, and become soldiers of Jesus Christ.

On the 28th day of July I was set at liberty to go wheresoever I thought was most for God's glory, who has delivered me from my bonds; for He hath done the work, and to Him the glory is due. What am I that He should care for me? But He is a God that heareth prayer; and the cries of His people inclined Him to take my cause in hand.—Praise the

Lord, O my soul, who hath kept thee in all thy trials, and hath not suffered thee to faint in sore temptation!

Now I find the words true which Mr. John Wesley wrote to me at York: "Well, my brother, is the God whom you serve able to deliver you; and do you find Him faithful to His word? Is His grace still sufficient for you? I doubt it not. He will not suffer you to be weary or faint in your mind. But He had work for you to do which you knew not of, and thus His counsel was to be fulfilled. O, lose no time! Who knows how many souls God may by this means deliver into your hands? Shall not all these things be for the furtherance of the Gospel? And is not the time coming when we shall cry out together, 'Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us?'"

On the 29th of July, 1744, the day after I was released from my captivity, I preached at the room in Newcastle; and the power of the Lord was present. Several more were converted that week, and my own soul refreshed amongst them.

The week after I set out for home; and brother Tinkler assisted me with a horse as far as Ferry-Hill, where we commended each other to the grace of God, and I set out on foot.

The day after I met brother Ash and two more near Boroughbridge, coming to meet me with my mare. We stopped, and sang praise together unto God, who had broken my bonds and preserved me in many dangers.

It was given out for me to preach at Leeds that night; and I preached in an open yard to a large company of rich and poor, who did not attend our preaching before I was sent for a soldier. Thus we

see that what the enemies of the Lord Jesus do to hinder His Gospel helps to enlarge His kingdom. So it is, that He turns the fierceness of men to His praise, and the remainder of it He restrains ; for not one in Leeds opened his mouth against me, but hundreds said they were glad to see me at liberty again.

When I got home, I found my wife and children well ; and we praised God together. But when I came to converse with the people, my soul was distressed within me ; for those that had showed me great love before I went, by their behaviour and countenance, now seemed to wish I had not come back ; for Mr. Viney, who had been with the Moravians, had got among them in my absence, and had preached to them another Gospel. They now told me they did not want the law or work-preaching any more, but that they wanted to be fed ; and that neither Mr. Wesley nor I knew how to build up souls as well as Mr. Viney did. But I found that they were built up in an unholy faith ; for they said, to tell people that they must be holy in this world was Mr. Wesley's error and mine, and we kept souls in bondage by preaching as we did. Some of them, indeed, showed their liberty by trampling under foot the law of God and man.

When I saw such havoc made among the flock by his soft words and fair speeches, my soul was distressed within me, so that I could not eat my bread. I threw myself on the ground, and wished for death, saying, "Lord, why hast Thou suffered me to come back to see this evil ?"

When I preached, many stood like stocks or stones, and others smiled at one another ; so that my preaching was like a feather thrown against a

rock, or as water spilt upon the ground, except to a few strangers who were affected. I said, "Woe is me! for my children flee from me, as if I had brought the plague amongst them!"

I humbled myself before God, and begged for light that I might know His will: and I opened the Book on these words, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." I went out, and stood upon a table, and preached from these words to a large congregation, who seemed to be as a people that never heard the Gospel before; and there began to be a trembling amongst them, when many fell to the ground, and cried out, "Lord, save, or I perish!" Many came to me weeping, and said, "We have been deluded by the German song. O pray for us, that God may give us back that tender conscience which we have lost since you left us!" Then Mr. Vincy went out of the congregation, hung down his head, and owned us no more. But my soul revived again; for sinners were converted, and others restored to the simplicity of the Gospel, who had been wise above what is written. But some continue to this day in their "happy-sinnership." I met with one of them, the other day, so drunk that he could not keep the cart-road. I asked him what he thought of himself now, if death were to seize him in that wretched condition. He said, that "he was not afraid to die, for he was as his Saviour would have him to be; and if He would have him to be

holy, He would make him so; but he was a poor sinner, and he hoped to be so to eternity." He said, "You and John Wesley are enemies to the Lamb; for you want people to be holy here. But the Lamb shall have the honour of saving me: I will not offer to save myself, like you Pharisees." I cried out, "Lord, keep me from that delusion!"

After some time I went to York, and found the seed sown in my captivity had sprung up; for nineteen had found peace with God, and twice as many were under convictions, though they had no one to instruct them in my absence. But the little books I left them, viz., the sermon on "Awake, thou that sleepest," and "Salvation by Faith," and the "Extract from the Homilies," and the "Nature and Design of Christianity," had been of great use to them. O what good might be done, if these books were spread through the land!

Soon after Mr. Wesley sent for me to London, and I found my soul blessed in speaking to the people; and many came to hear out of curiosity, when they heard it was the man that had been in prison: and several were convinced of the truth they heard.

When I was at London, I received a letter from Sunderland, wherein I was desired to go and preach there. Two men who had conversed with me, when I was captive there, had found the Lord; and they said that their souls panted for the salvation of their neighbours. So I see that God leads the blind by a way they know not: for I thought all that I had said there was as water spilt on the ground. But the Lord confirms His own word, when we see little outward appearance of it. O how wonderful are Thy works, O Lord! what a great fire is kindled by a

little spark in that place ! Now I see that the wise man's advice is good, where he saith, " Sow thy seed in the morning, and in the evening withhold not thy hand ; for thou knowest not which shall prosper, this or that."

In my return from London, I preached at Nottingham Cross to a large congregation, most of whom behaved very well ; except a few who had prepared squibs to throw in my face : but three of them were burnt with the fire that they intended for me, and went away, and left me to finish my discourse quietly. When I had done, there came a serjeant to the Cross to me, and fell down on his knees, and said, " For the Lord's sake, pray for me ; for I came on purpose to pull you down ; but the dread of God fell upon me, (when I saw those burnt with the squibs that they intended to have thrown in your face,) and your words came as a sword to my heart ; and I am convinced that you are God's servant. I never served either God or my king as I ought to do ; but I hope I shall begin to lead a new life from this hour." This being in the presence of all the people, it seemed to season what I had said to them. As I was preaching, one Stephen Dickson, and two more preachers, came and stood awhile. They then spoke aloud, and said, " Why hear ye him ? For he is as legal and blind as the two Wesleys themselves."

When I got home, I found the people in a prosperous way, and the greatest part of them quite delivered from the Antinomian principles that they had fallen into during my captivity ; and the Lord had increased them in grace and number. To Him be the glory given !

Soon after I went to Newcastle, and laboured

there about three months, and had an opportunity to visit Sunderland. I preached at the Cross to the greatest part of the town, who behaved well, and stood all the time, though the snow was eight or nine inches deep. I went there as often as I could ; and God visited many with His salvation there, and at Painshaw and Biddick, who blessed God that I had been sent among them. They said, that they would pray for our minister, who was the cause of my coming ; for they were more beholden to him than to me ; and, let him intend what he would, they had reason to bless God in his behalf. So it is evident, God hath His way in the whirlwind, and His path in the great waters.

On my return to Leeds, I found that the Lord had greatly blessed the labours of Jonathan Reeves and John Bennet ; several being converted by their preaching, both there and at Birstal.

I was afterwards ordered to Bristol. In my way I called at Nottingham : and as I was preaching, a mob came into the house, and made a noise, as if they had been in a cock-pit, so that my voice could not be heard for some time. When they were silent, I began to speak ; and one of them came behind me, and filled my mouth with dirt out of the kennel. I never felt myself so near being choked in my life ; but when I had gotten the dirt out, I spoke again. The ringleader of them turned about, and said, “Let him alone ; for he is right, and we are wrong ; and if any one of you touch him, I will knock you down.” He guarded me to my lodgings, and bore many blows for me : he desired me to pray for him, that he might not rest till he had found peace with God ; for he was sure he had fought against the truth ; but by grace he would do so no more.

I found peace at Wednesbury; and several who had been persecutors were converted, and were content to bear the reproach of the Gospel. O what a good God have we to deal with! It is plain, whoever turn at His reproof, He will pour out His Spirit upon them, and receive them into His family, after all they have done to provoke Him.

I found peace at all the places in my way to Bristol; and my soul was refreshed among the people in that city. Here, and in some parts of Somersetshire and Wiltshire, I spent four months. Several were awakened at Paulton, Coleford, Oakley, Shepton-Mallet, Road, and Bearfield. So God doth work, and none can hinder, though the instruments be ever so weak: if He command it, a worm shall shake the earth.

While I was in these parts, the rebels entered our land; and many trembled for fear of the calamities that were expected at their coming, and attended the word and prayer, though they used not to attend before: but after the Lord had put His hook into the rebels' jaws, and turned them back by the way they came, many were as careless about their souls as ever.

A little before I left Bristol, I received a letter from Mr. Charles Wesley, containing only the following words:—"My brother, you must watch and pray, labour and suffer. My spirit is with you. You will shortly be wanted in Yorkshire. Farewell."—Indeed God hath made him a true prophet to me: for I see as much need to watch and pray as ever I did; and I believe I shall, as long as I am in this howling wilderness; and to exert all my strength in labouring to persuade sinners to flee from the wrath to come, for I see myself a debtor to all men.

I remember, about eight months before I was pressed for a soldier, Mr. C. Wesley was preaching near my house, in the open street, and said in his preaching, "Before I shall come to preach here again, the devil will be permitted to cast some of you into prison; but it shall turn to the glory of God, and to the furtherance of the Gospel." I little thought then that the cloud would burst on my head: but when it did, his words were a support to me in my trials.

When I left Bristol, I met with many sufferings. At almost every place where I came to preach, mobs were raised, as if they were determined to kill me and all God's children, in a kind of thanksgiving, because the rebels were conquered. O, what stupid creatures are men in their carnal state!

When I got to Nottingham, I preached to a peaceable congregation. About half an hour after I had done, as I and four or five more were sitting by the fire, the constable, with a mob at his heels, came rushing into the house, and said, "Where is the preacher?" I said, "I am he, sir." He replied, "You must go with me before the mayor." I said, "Where is your warrant?" He replied, "My staff is my warrant. Come, lads, help me; for I will make him go before the mayor." I said, "I am not afraid to go before him; but it is your business to take up that swearer: you hear there is another that swears; and if you don't take them up, it is in my power to make you pay forty shillings for not doing your duty." He regarded not what I said, but hauled me away. When he had got almost to the mayor's house, a gentlemanlike man said, "Constable, where are you going with him?" He said, "To the mayor." He replied, "Pray don't;

for the mayor is their friend, and says he will put any one that disturbs them into the house of correction: therefore carry him before Alderman H——l, and he will do for him." "Then we must turn another way," said he. But I said, "I insist upon going before the mayor." But he replied, "I will make you go where I please." I said, "You told me you must carry me before the mayor: I find you are a strange officer, to encourage swearing and tell lies yourself." Then the mob shouted, and cried, "Help us to guard the Methodist preacher to the house of correction."

By that time we got to the alderman's house, there were several hundreds gathered together; and when we came there, he said, "Whom have you brought, constable?" To me he said, "I wonder you can't stay in your own places: you might be convinced by this time, that the mob of Nottingham will never let you preach quietly in this town." I replied, "I beg pardon, sir, I did not know before now that this town was governed by a mob; for most such towns are governed by magistrates." He blushed, and said, "Do you think that we will protect Wesley and you, a pack of you? No. I believe you are the cause of all the commotions that have been in the land." I replied, "Sir, can you prove that one man who is joined to us did assist the Pretender with either men, money, or arms?" He said, "It hath been observed, that there was always such a preaching, brawling people before any judgment came upon the land." I replied, "That is the goodness of God towards the people, for sending His messengers to warn them to repent, that they may escape His judgments here, and the torments of the damned hereafter. Sir, you may as well say, that it was

through Jeremiah that the Chaldeans destroyed the temple, and took the inhabitants of Jerusalem captives, because he told them it would be so, if they did not repent and turn to God. No, sir, it is not for praying and preaching that evil comes on a land, but for swearing and cursing, drunkenness and debauchery ; for oppressing the poor, and loving pleasure more than God ; and for denying the Lord that bought us. These are the people that bring the sword, pestilence, and famine into the land." The constable said, " Do you think we will take warning by such fellows as you ? " I said, " If you will not, you must feel the blow ; for if there be not a reformation in the land, God will pour out His judgments upon man and beast. Therefore, I warn you all to look unto the rod ; for it is appointed to them that disobey the Gospel." Then the alderman said, " So, so ; you must not preach here. I verily believe you are a good man." Then he said, " Constable, I will not send this man to the house of correction. I think, as you keep a public-house, you may let him lie there to-night ; for he is on his journey." The constable said, " I beg that he may not be at my house." " Well, then," said he, " he may go to Mary White's, where he came from." I spoke a few more words to him, and wished him a good night. He said, " Mr. Nelson, I wish you well, wherever you go."

When I had got into the street, I do not know but there might be a thousand people ; but I saw not one that I knew ; therefore, I went and stood under a lamp, that my acquaintances might see me. The alderman came to the door, and said to the constable, " Take care of Mr. Nelson, that no one molest him : see him safe to Mary White's." The constable

seemed much ashamed, and did as he was ordered. Then the man that advised him to carry me before the alderman came to me, and said, "Thy nimble tongue has delivered thee at this time." I said, "No, sir, it is my God, who hath the hearts of all men in His hand."

When we got to Mary White's, we sang a hymn, and gave praise to God, and prayed for our enemies, and recommended each other to God's care and protection; and we had a comfortable meeting at five the next morning.

When I got home, I found all things in a comfortable way; and the Lord added many to the number of His children that winter, and several died in the triumph of faith. "Wonderful art Thou, O Lord, in all Thy works: and as Thou art in majesty, so art Thou in mercy!"

One day, I happened to fall in company with a gentleman, that was called one of the chief teachers in Israel, who began to ridicule Mr. Wesley, and all that labour with him; saying, "They are a short-sighted, ignorant set of people; neither are they willing to be instructed in the truths of the Gospel." I said, "Sir, I am one of them, and I am open to conviction. Show me our error, and I hope, by grace, to forsake it." He said, "You all deny the faith delivered to the saints, in denying election and reprobation." I said, "I do not know that that is the faith of the Gospel; for the Apostle Paul saith, 'It was not written for Abraham's sake alone, that faith was counted to him for righteousness, but for our sakes, if we believe in Him that raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.' I think, therefore, that this is the faith of the

Gospel,—that I with my heart believe that Jesus Christ died for my sins, and rose again for my justification ; that He died for me, that His life might be made manifest in my mortal flesh ; that I might not live to myself, but to Him who died for me. And this faith kindles in the hearts of those who receive it a flame of love to God, and to every soul of man ; and I would not give a straw for any thing called faith, short of this. The same apostle saith, that his commission to the people and to the Gentiles was, ‘to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God ; that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Jesus Christ ;’ but there is not one word of reprobation in his commission : and if any come to preach another Gospel, let him be accursed.” He stormed at me, and called me a muddy-headed creature several times. I answered, “My head is muddy, or your doctrine is unclean. If you clear God, and do not make Him a liar, nor guilty of perjury, nor the author of all sin, then I may think as you do.” He asked, “What do you mean ?” I replied, “He hath said several times, that He is no respecter of persons ; but you have given Him the lie many times since I came into your company. And you have made Him guilty of perjury : for He swears by His own life, that He hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner ; and you have affirmed, that it is God’s pleasure to leave the greatest part of mankind to an unmerciful devil, to govern them here, and to torment them hereafter ; nay, you affirm, that it is His good pleasure to damn infants from their mother’s womb. O sir, beware what you say against the God of love ! for you have made Him

worse than Moloch : by your words, that man is as much doing the will of God that cuts his father's throat, and that ravisheth his own mother, as he that feedeth the hungry, and clotheth the naked ! O sir, is this the God that was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself ? No, He is loving to every man, and His mercy is over all His works : and St. John saith, ‘He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God ; for God is love.’” Then he made a noise like a butcher in the bear-garden. When I could be heard, I said, “Sir, if ever you preach again, I must look upon you either as a fool or knave.” He asked, “Why so?” I replied, “You say, the elect were chosen from eternity, and the rest set apart for misery ; and that the decree cannot be broken : and if you think one of the chosen can be lost for want of preaching, or one of the reprobates can be saved by your preaching, you must be void of reason. And you must be something worse, if you believe the thing is fixed, and that preaching will aggravate the torments of the lost, and that the greatest part of your hearers are lost, who help to maintain you as a gentleman, only to increase their damnation.” He looked at me with a stern countenance, and said, “You are as bad as Wesley himself.” I replied, “Sir, why do you find fault? If what you say be true, God hath decreed me to think as I do. And how can I break this decree?” He said, “I hate to hear you talk so.” I answered, “Do you want God to break His decree?” Then he went away in a rage.

Another preacher of the same sort heard of our dispute, and told me he would put a question to me which would drive me from inherent righteousness ; viz., “Whether the white raiment that those

appeared in before the throne of heaven was not the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ?" I said, "No, sir." But he affirmed it was. I then said, "It is almost blasphemy, in my opinion, to say so." He said, "What do you mean?" I answered, "The Scripture saith that 'they came out of great tribulation; and washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' I never heard that His life was stained by sin; neither man nor devil could accuse Him thereof. His righteousness had no need of washing: it is blasphemy to say that it had. For shame, go home and read the Scriptures, and you will see it is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses from all sin, but cloaks none. When a soul appears in that company, it is not like a dunghill covered with snow, but really pure; and is, by the power of Jesus Christ's Spirit, restored to the image of God, in which it was at first created; and then, and not till then, can it enter in at the gates of the New Jerusalem, and join the angels, and archangels, and spirits of just men made perfect, to sing an eternal anthem to the great Three-One." He said, "You shall never make me think as Wesley and you do." I replied, "If you do not in this world, you will in the next; for if you die defiled and unclean, you must be cast into a lake that burneth with fire and brimstone: so you had better begin now yourself, and advise your hearers to cry out, 'Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me, O Lord!' for none but the pure in heart can see God." He said, "I do not care what you can say; for my salvation was completed when Christ hung on the cross." I replied, "Not so; for He did not repent for you. You must repent for yourself, or eternally perish, after all He hath done and

suffered for you ; and you must also perish if you do not believe that He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. Nor was He risen again when He hung on the cross, which yet was a necessary part of the work that He came to do. Nor was He born again for you ; for you must be born again, or you can never enter into the kingdom of heaven ; and be really made a partaker of the Divine nature by regeneration, or you have no more right to call God your Father, or heaven your inheritance, than I have to call King George my father, and his throne mine." He said, " You are a strange set of people," and left me. O my God, take the matter into Thy own hand, and put a stop to that anti-christian doctrine which is spreading as a flood in our land ; and give the people to see the truth as it is in Jesus ; and create such a hungering and thirsting in them after inward holiness, that they may pant as the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, till all that is in them be made holiness to the Lord!

I was in hopes that I had done with that sort o. people ; but a third came to me soon after, saying in a rage, " You are an enemy to the Gospel." I asked, " Wherein, sir ?" He replied, " In saying that Christ died for all; and in denying imputed righteousness." I answered, " Faith in Christ is imputed for righteousness to every soul that believeth ; and they are freely forgiven for His sake, received into God's favour and family, and are made partakers of the same Spirit that raised our Lord from the dead ; whereby they are enabled to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live a godly, righteous, and sober life in this present evil world, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God. In the Scripture sense, these live not, but Christ liveth in them ; and He

doth actually destroy the works of the devil, and re-instamp the image of God in their souls; and I read of no other qualification to fit a soul for God's company." He said, "You are stupid; and so are all they that follow Wesley; but I believe as I say, and so do many better men than either he or you." I answered, "If you and all the preachers in England were to believe so, I will not give you credit, unless the word of God *expressly* says, that Christ did *not* die for all: but it saith several times, that He did die for *all*; but not once, that He did *not* die for all: and how you came to be wise above what is written, I know not; neither do I want such wisdom." I added, "Tell me, sir, did you ever feel the love of God in your own soul? If you did, I appeal to your conscience, whether at that time you did not find love to every soul of man. Now, this was not your nature, but the nature of God; and if one drop of the bucket could so swell your soul, what must that ocean be from which it came! But I cannot help thinking, that you of that principle never knew God; or, if you had known Him, you have forgotten Him; for you make Him worse than Moloch." On this he fell into a rage with me. I said, "Be not angry with me, but rather be consistent with yourself; and if I could believe as you do, I would not have so long troubled the people with preaching; for you say, 'Not one of them that Christ died for can perish, nor the rest be saved.' Then why do you and I beat the air? For Christ will have His, you say; and the devil must have his: therefore, let each have his own quietly; and do not torment the poor creatures before the time." He then went away in haste, and sent for arguments to those of his own stamp in London, to put a stop

to universal redemption and inward holiness; but he never yet brought them to me.

Soon after, I met with a Roman Catholic, who began to condemn all sects and parties, saying, they must all perish that die out of the pale of the Church; that there is but one Church, and that the Church of Rome is it." I replied, "Whatever the Church of Rome is, you do not belong to Christ's church yet; for you curse and swear, and get drunk, and break the Sabbath: and while you continue to do so, you belong to the synagogue of Satan." But he said, "Our priests have Peter's power, and could and would forgive the sins of all that belonged to our community." I answered, "Not so; for one wicked man cannot forgive another, nor forgive his own sins. No: it is God that is offended; and it is He that is offended who must forgive the offender. One rebel cannot forgive another: it is the king that must forgive both, or both must suffer. You say also, that the wafer is the real body, and the wine the real blood, of Christ, after consecration: then, according to you, whosoever is a partaker of it hath eternal life abiding in him. But the Scripture saith, that 'no whoremonger, or drunkard, or blasphemer, hath eternal life abiding in him;' and you know that many of your Church that are partakers of the eucharist are such. Nay, St. Paul tells us, in the fifth chapter of Galatians, of seventeen sorts of sinners that shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Therefore be not deceived, neither cast away the reason God hath given you. Now bring your wafer, and set it before a swine, an ape, or a bear, and they will devour it: how, then, can you dare to say that it is Divine? If it be so, these brutes must be raised up at the last

day, as well as you." He gave me bad words; and another of them said, if he might have his will on me, he would have me boiled in oil: they then left me. O my God, rend away the veil of ignorance from that people, and let all nations see Thy salvation!

On my journey to the place where I was going to preach, I called at a gentleman's house, where was much company; and he insisted I should stay and dine with them. I desired to be excused. He said, "What is your reason? You have time enough on your hands." I replied, "Sir, I don't care to affront you in your own house." "What do you mean?" he said. I answered, "If I affront the gentlemen at your table, it will affront you: and I do not expect to sit at the table to-day, without hearing the name of the Lord blasphemed, though there be two clergymen in the company; and if I do, I must reprove them, or carry a guilty conscience home, which I will not do for all you have." He said, "I insist on your dining with me; and you are welcome to reprove sin: and, if I should be guilty, reprove me first." I said, "You, sir, as soon as any one; or I should not love your soul as well as another's."

When we were seated, I had scarcely time to eat one morsel, before I had occasion to reprove; for one gentleman was a Roman Catholic, and he hardly spoke three words, but one was an oath. I said to the master of the feast, "There is one thing too deep for me; I cannot fathom it." He asked, "What is that?" I answered, "When I see a man endowed with reason, and of a liberal education, run himself out of breath for no prize." He said, "What do you mean?" I replied, "When a man will damn his soul with swearing and cursing, it is

as if he ran for no prize. If he damn his soul to gratify his vain and foolish desires, he hath a sort of pleasure, though it is brutish; but the other brings neither pleasure nor credit." Then said the gentleman, "Peter swore." I replied, "He did so; but when he had done, he went out and wept bitterly; and I do not suppose he ever swore again.—Sir, I wish you would do as he did." He answered, "Well, I own it is not right to swear; but here are some of your clergy, as you call yourself a Churchman, that will swear as much as I, when they are hunting." I said, "Sir, I am sorry to hear that; but it will not justify either you or me, if we swear, because your priest and my minister will swear." Then another said, "Do you think that Mr. John Wesley would not swear a vain oath for a hundred pounds?" I answered, "I believe he would not swear a vain oath to save his neck from the gallows. If I were sure he would, I would turn my back on him for ever." The Roman Catholic said, "I neither care what you nor he may say; for hunt I will, and I have as good a pack of fox-dogs as any in the kingdom, and a couple of as good horses to follow them; which do but cost me about two hundred pounds a year; and I can well afford it." But I replied, "Sir, how will you answer for spending two hundred pounds a year, when you come to give an account of your stewardship?" He answered, "It is my own; I am not a steward." I replied, "You are but a steward, sir: for 'the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; so are the cattle on a thousand hills.' He says, 'The gold is Mine, and the silver is Mine;' and He will say to you, 'Thou hast taken My gold and My silver, and spent it on dogs, horses, and fighting-cocks, in the room of feeding the

hungry, and clothing the naked ; or of being as a husband to the widow, or as a father to the fatherless, or as eyes to the blind, or legs to the lame.' O sir, consider it is but a little while before God will say to you, 'Come, and give an account of thy stewardship ; for thou mayest be no longer steward !' Then you will wish that all you had spent in voluptuousness and vain pleasures had been given to the poor and needy." Then the two clergymen whispered together ; and the whisper went round to the Roman Catholic ; and he said, "Why did God make dogs of such a nature, if it were not for gentlemen's diversion ?" I answered, "Who dare say that God made them so ?" He said, "Did not God make them ?" "Yes, sir," I replied, "and you too ; but not as you are." He said, "What do you mean ?" I replied, "When God had finished the creation, He pronounced everything good ; and there was no death in any creature. But when sin entered into the world, then death entered into the world by sin. But before man sinned against his Maker, there was nothing in one creature that could take the life of another. No ; the hare would as soon have hunted the hound, as the hound the hare. At that time, the lamb would as soon have killed the lion, as the lion the lamb ; and the pigeon the hawk, as the hawk the pigeon. But since the fall, the earth is cursed for man's sins, and everything that it produces ; nay, it is all a curse to man, till it is sanctified to him by prayer. And I do not believe that you or any who is here go to your knees to desire God to give His blessing on your undertakings, when you go a hunting, and to enable you to use the hounds and horses to His glory ; not believing that you can do anything that will please Him better." He said, "I have heard that Wesley had taught you the art

of reasoning; and I find he has." I replied, "Sir, if you or any man that is present can disprove what I say, let him do it now."

After my return to Leeds, I went to Wakefield, and preached to a small but serious congregation.

The next morning I set out for Kirkheaton; and in my way I called to breakfast with a friend in Horbury. Before I had been there half an hour, the house was beset with almost the whole town, men, women, and children, who cried out, as with one voice, "Bring him out, that we may put him into the river." I went out to them, and said, "What do you want?" They d——d me, and said, "You, you Methodist dog." I replied, "What have I done to you? I am not going to preach here now." Then the parson's son swore, "You shall never preach more; for we will drown you in the river this day." And I found that almost the whole town had agreed together, that all the journeymen and apprentices should leave work as soon as the next preacher came into the town, and put a halter about his neck, and drag him into the river, and drown him, that the town might be quit of them for ever; and the parson's son, as the captain of the mob, had prepared a crazy man to put the halter about my neck: and he stood with one in his hand, and a butcher with a rope to hale me along; but, while my voice could be heard, they had not power to touch me. Then they went to the clerk's house, and got six large hand-bells, and came and rung them round me, so that my voice could not be heard; and then the madman, who was about six feet high, put the halter to my throat. But I put my hand between my throat and it, and pushed it back; and the man fell to the ground, as if he had been knocked down with an

axe; and the butcher stood trembling, and touched me not. The constable then came, with his staff in his hand; upon which the mob cried, "Here is the constable: let him come, and he will put the rope on him now; for he will help us." He came to me, and I said, "Are you the constable?" He answered, "Yes, I am; and that I will let you know." I replied, "I am glad you are come; and I charge you in the king's name to do your office." He asked, "What is my office?" I answered, "It is to quell this mob, and to deliver me out of their hands; and, if I have done anything contrary to law, to carry me before a magistrate, and let me be punished by the law." He turned pale, and said, "Whither are you going?" I answered, "I was going to the stable to get my horse, but was stopped by this mob." He bade them be silent, and said, "Follow me." He went to the stable, and led out my horse, and held the stirrup, while I got on. Then, after leading me quite through the crowd, he bade me go in the name of the Lord. O my God! hitherto Thou hast helped me!

When I got to my place, we had a comfortable meeting; for the power of the Lord was present to heal; and one that had waited long was set at liberty; and all praised the Lord on my behalf, for His delivering me from the hands of the ungodly.

I went once more to York, in Passion-week; and preached on Good-Friday, at Hepworth Moor, to a serious, peaceable people; and gave out that I would preach there on Easter-Sunday, at eight in the evening. Then I went to a village about three miles from York, where I preached to a very large and well-behaved congregation.

On Easter-Sunday I went to Hepworth Moor at

the time appointed, and found two companies of people assembled: the one came to hear the word, and the other to mob. After we had sung a hymn and prayed, I opened my book on those words, "God having raised up His Son Jesus Christ, sent Him to bless you, in turning every one of you from your iniquities:" and I went on to prove that this was His business in this present evil world, actually to save all true believers from their sins; and that it was neither sect, party, nor opinion, that made a man a real member of Christ's church; but the real Christians are those that are saved from their sins by Jesus Christ,—from sins both of omission and of commission; and everything short of this, was not Christianity. "Therefore," I said, "be not deceived: for whosoever is defiled, or unclean, cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, but must be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. And as this day is kept in the remembrance of God's raising His Son up to bless us, let every one cry out, 'Lord, bless me, and turn me from my iniquities!'" Then a gentleman, a Papist, that brought the rebels to mob, cried out, "Knock out the brains of that mad dog!" and perfectly gnashed with his teeth. Immediately a shower of stones came, and hit many of the people; and they continued to throw, till not one could stand to hear me. Nevertheless, not one stone hit me, though I stood as a mark on the table, when all were fled from me; and I talked to the mob. But, as I was going away, a piece of a brick struck me on the back of my head, and I fell flat on my face, and must have lain for some time, had not two men lifted me up; but I could not stand for some time. The blood ran down my back quite into my shoes;

and the mob followed me through the city, swearing that they would kill me when they got me out of it. I said unto the Lord, "Lord, Thou wast slain without the gate, and Thou canst deliver me from the hands of these blood-thirsty men." When I was got over the bridge, a gentleman came and took me by the hand, saying, "What is the matter, you bleed so?" Some of the mob answered, "This is but little to what we will do to him." Then the gentleman pulled me into his house, and told the mob, if they did not disperse immediately, some of them should be in the Castle before an hour was at an end. Then they fled away; and he sent for a surgeon to dress my head.

I lay down awhile; and brother Salton came with my horse, and I rode to Ackham, where I was to have preached at five in the afternoon; but just at that time, there came about ten young gentlemen,—some in the coach, some on the box, and some behind the coach,—who began to sing the songs of the drunkards, and to throw rotten eggs at the women.

I and two more were walking in a little field by the house, when there came two big men, one of whom swore, "Here he is: I will kill him, if there were not another man alive." I told him that he had not any reason to kill me, for I had done him no wrong; nor any one in that town. Then he pulled off his hat and wig, and gave them to the other man, saying, "If I do not kill him, I will be d---d." Then he came as fiercely to me as he could, with an intent to run his head against the pit of my stomach; but I stepped aside, and he pitched on his head. When he got up, I spoke to him again, and asked what I had done amiss to him. He gave me no answer, but ran at me again, and caught hold on the

collar of my shirt, which rent in pieces, and he fell down at my feet again. Then he got up, and came to me a third time ; and, as I made no resistance, he threw me down, and leaped with his knees on my belly several times, till he had beaten the breath out of me, and set my head a-bleeding again. He then went to the gentlemen that hired him and the other man to kill me, and said, "Gentlemen, I have killed the preacher : he lies dead in the croft." And then he took one of our friends, and threw him against the corner of a wall, and broke two of his ribs. The parson's brother said, "Well, we will see for ourselves : we will not take your word." Upon which he and about twenty more came to me ; but my breath was come again, and I was turned on my face, and lay bleeding on the ground. One of them said, "He will get his death if he lie there awhile." Then they lifted me up, and said, "We will help you into the house." When I could speak, I said, "Your mercy is only to make way for more cruelty. Gentlemen, if I have done anything contrary to the law, let me be punished by the law. I am a subject of King George ; and to his law I appeal ; and I am willing to go before my Lord Mayor, as he is the king's magistrate." But they cursed me and the king too, saying he was as bad as we, or he would have hanged us all like dogs before now. One actually d——d him, and said, "If he were here, we wculd serve him as bad as you."

The parson's brother cursed me, and said, "According to your preaching, you would prove our ministers to be blind guides and false prophets ; but we will kill you as fast as you come." One said, "If Wesley come on Tuesday, he shall not live another day in this world." When I got into the

street, they set up a huzzah, and a person caught hold on my right hand, and gave me a hasty pluck ; at the same time, another struck me on the left side of my head, and knocked me down. As I got up, they knocked me down eight times ; and when I lay on the ground, not being able to get up, they took me by the hair of my head, and dragged me upon the stones for nearly twenty yards ; some kicking me on my thighs and sides with their feet, as the others dragged me along ; and six of them got on my body and thighs, to tread the Holy Spirit out of me, as they said. Then they let me alone a little while, and said one to another, " We cannot kill him." One said, " I have heard that a cat has nine lives ; but I think he has nine score." Another said, " If he has, he shall die this day." A third said, " Where is his horse ? for he shall quit the town immediately." And they said to me, " Order your horse to be brought to you ; for you shall go before we leave you." I said, " I will not ; for you intend to kill me in private, that you may escape justice. But if you do murder me, it shall be in public ; and it may be that the gallows may bring you to repentance, and your souls may be saved from the wrath to come." Then one of them swore, if I would not go, he would put me into the draw-well ; and they lifted up the lid of the well, and dragged me towards it : but a woman, big with child, stood by the well, and pushed several of them down, so that they could not get me to it. Then two gentlewomen, who came out of the city, called the gentlemen by their names that were striving to put me in ; who all let me go, and, turning to the gentlewomen, looked as men confounded. In the mean time, some friends got me up, and helped me into the house. Then all the mob

set out for the city, singing debauched songs. This was on Easter Sunday.

I heard one of them say, as he got into the coach, "It is impossible for him to live; and if John Wesley comes on Tuesday, we will kill him. Then we shall be quite rid of the Methodists for ever; for no one will dare to come, if they two be killed."

When they were gone, I sent for something to sweat me; and I sweat so violently, that in the morning my shirt was as if it had been stained with raw beef. But I was not so sore as I expected; for I set out to meet Mr. Wesley, and was enabled to ride forty miles that day.

I met him at Osmotherley, and heard him preach on a tombstone, in the churchyard, to a large and serious congregation. I found his word to come with power to my soul, and was constrained to cry out, "O Lord, I will praise Thee for Thy goodness to me; for Thou hast been with me in all my trials; Thou hast brought me out of the jaws of death; and though Thou didst permit men to ride over my head, and didst lay afflictions on my loins, yet Thou hast brought me through fire and water into a wealthy place!" And, indeed, in all my persecutions, my soul was kept in peace; so that I felt neither fear nor anger.

So far, Lord, I am Thy witness: for Thou dost give strength for the day, according to Thy word, and grace to help in time of need. O my dear Redeemer, how shall I praise Thee as Thou oughtest to be praised? O let my life be a living sacrifice to Thee; for it is by Thee alone that I escaped both temporal and eternal death!

When I had told Mr. Wesley of the treatment I had met with, he blessed God for my deliverance.

However, I advised him not to go to York at that time, but to go to Leeds ; and God blessed his word to many souls at Leeds that week.

Thus far I can say, “The Lord is my Helper.” O may I never grieve His Spirit ! Then will He be “my Guide unto death, and my Portion for ever.”

This is a plain narrative of the dealings of God and man with me, from my youth to the forty-second year of my natural life.

JOHN NELSON.

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It does not appear that any journal was kept by Mr. Nelson after this time. In 1747 he was present at a Conference held in London, which consisted of only nine preachers ; and at this meeting the peculiar doctrines of Methodism, as held by Mr. John Wesley, were examined.

From the year 1750 to 1770 Mr. Nelson was stationed as a regular preacher to the societies in various parts of England ; viz., London, Bristol, Birstal, Leeds, Derbyshire, Yarm, and York, as appears in the Minutes of Conference ; and once he visited Ireland.

In 1771 a particular circumstance occurred which does honour to the Rules of Methodism. A woman whom Mr. Nelson had dismissed from the society, above twelve months before, for misbehaviour, stood charged at the York assizes with a capital crime. Mr. Nelson, being at that time in the York Circuit, was subpœnaed to appear at the Crown bar, to assign his reasons for having put this woman out of

the Methodist Society. Mr. Nelson read the Rules of the Society in court; and at the end of that rule which forbids contracting a debt without any probable way of paying it, he stopped, and said, "My lord, this was my reason for dismissing this woman from the Society to which I belong." The judge arose, and said, "Good morality, Mr. Nelson;" and then, being seated again, desired him to read the rest of the Rules. After hearing them, his lordship said emphatically to the court, "Gentlemen, this is true Christianity."

In 1773 Mr. Nelson was stationed in the Leeds Circuit; and, after seeing the work of God spread through the county of York, where God made him the honoured instrument of beginning the revival, he ended his labours and his life in peace, on July 18th, 1774. His remains were conveyed to Birstal for interment amidst thousands of spectators.

His tombstone bears the following inscription, in addition to some homely rhymes, the pious effusion of "the unlettered muse":—

"JOHN NELSON

DEPARTED THIS LIFE, JULY THE 18TH, 1774,

AGED 67 YEARS.

MARTHA, HIS WIFE,

DEPARTED THIS LIFE, SEPT. THE 11TH, 1774,

AGED 69 YEARS."

THE

## REMAINS OF MR. JOHN NELSON.

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### FRAGMENT FIRST :

#### CONCERNING HIS GRANDAUGHTER.

My granddaughter, about sixteen years of age, rejoiced in the Lord about six weeks before she died. Her last words to her father and mother were, "Fret not; for I am going to Jesus, and to help the angels to praise God."

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### FRAGMENT SECOND :

#### CONCERNING SARAH SCHOOLS.

SARAH SCHOOLS had been a steady follower of the Lord about twenty years. I visited her several times in her illness, and always found comfort to my own soul.

The morning she died, she said to her son, "I have had a glorious night, and now I am ready to go to my dear Redeemer. In the fore part of the night, there was a cloud between Him and my soul; but I cried, 'Lord, hide not Thy face from me!' and immediately the cloud dispersed, and the glory of God shone bright on my soul."

When Miss B. had prayed with her, she said,

‘ Hold on in the way thou art in, and we shall meet again in glory.’ Having said this, she fell asleep in the arms of Jesus.

JOHN NELSON.

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FRAGMENT THIRD:

CONCERNING S. H., OF HANGING-HEATON.

S. H. falling into a kind of trance, when she came to herself, she told her husband, she had been both in heaven and hell. When she was in the latter, she said, she saw several there whom she had known on earth. As she came out, she said, she saw one she knew (whom she then named) tumbling in, head and heels together. As soon as she came to herself, she sent her husband to see whether he was dead or not. When he inquired of the family, they had no thought of his death, seeing he was quite well when he went to bed. But, on going to see, they found him dead, with his head and heels together, as she had seen him before.

On this, she gave some account of what she had seen in heaven. Among others, she saw Paul Greenwood, who shone like a sunbeam, together with many more whom she knew on earth. Moreover, she saw the place she was to go to. She then told them when she was to die, and accordingly died exactly at that time.

When these things were noised abroad, many hearts were filled with fear; and perhaps a few more stirred up to seek the Lord with great earnestness.

N.B. This woman had known the Lord, and adorned the Gospel, twelve years.

JOHN NELSON.

## FRAGMENT FOURTH:

## CONCERNING MRS. CROWDER.

MRS. CROWDER had adorned the Gospel about six years, and was a great pattern both of charity and piety. She laboured under a lingering illness, and was worn almost to a skeleton. The last time I visited her, she seemed like a bride adorned for the bridegroom. I found the Lord was very present with her. The last words she spoke were, "All is well! for I have neither doubt nor fear." Then, with a smiling countenance, she fell asleep in the arms of Jesus, while many cried out, "O let me die her death!"

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## FRAGMENT FIFTH:

## CONCERNING J. B., OF KIRKHEATON.

J. B. was awakened about thirty-one years ago, and soon received a sense of the love of God; but, marrying, the cares of the world so beset him, that he walked in heaviness some time. When Mr. Wesley came first to Birstal, the Lord again revealed Himself to him, and in such a manner, that he never lost His presence after for a single week. From that time, he adorned the Gospel in the whole of his behaviour; though for ten years he laboured under a very sore disorder. In the midst of his suffering, he mightily praised God, and exhorted the class, which he met for twenty-eight years, to keep in the way they were then in. He said, "God will give

you strength for your day, as He hath enabled me to fight the good fight of faith. Through Him, I am more than conqueror; and there is a crown of glory prepared for me. I have no doubt or fear; for perfect love casteth out fear. Tell John Nelson to preach over my corpse." So saying, he resigned his soul to Jesus, and left a good savour behind him.

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#### FRAGMENT SIXTH:

##### CONCERNING S. CHASTER, OF DAW-GREEN.

S. Chaster had for ten years so adorned the Gospel, that it became a proverb in Dewsbury, "that few could live like S. Chaster." I visited her in her illness, and found great satisfaction. She said she had never lost her first love. When the Lord called her, she was full of good works, and seemed like a shock of wheat fully ripe.

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#### FRAGMENT SEVENTH:

##### CONCERNING H. BOOTH, OF CLECKHEATON.

H. Booth was converted one-and-thirty years ago, and retained a sense of the goodness of God a great part of that time, though she had many trials in her family. The first two years her husband strove to provoke her; but, coming to hear Mr. Charles Wesley, he was convinced that she was right and

he was wrong. He then sought the Lord, and found Him. Since then he has been a class-leader twenty-seven years; all which time he has also had the Gospel preached in his house. His wife was quite happy in her last illness, and finished her course with joy. Thus is the Lord giving both living and dying witnesses of His grace, that the saints may be encouraged to go on, and that sinners may be without excuse.

JOHN NELSON.

*Dec. 24th, 1772.*

ANOTHER ACCOUNT  
OF  
MR. NELSON'S DEATH.

LEEDS, *July 22d, 1774.*

LAST Monday, about three o'clock, Mr. John Nelson, coming in from dining with Mr. Towat, went up into his room, and said to S. B., "I do not know that I have been so well after dinner this long time." In a little while, being seized with a violent purging and vomiting, he was helped to bed. He had not been there long before he became insensible; and at half-past four o'clock in the afternoon he died. On Wednesday his remains were carried through the streets of Leeds, in their way to Birstal, attended by thousands, who were either singing or weeping. It was truly a very solemn season to many, to see him carried to his grave, who had done and suffered so much in these parts for the honour of God and the good of men. But as he died in the Lord, he now rests from his labours, and his works follow him. O, how ought we to be humbled, on seeing the first instruments of the great revival of religion in our day called away so fast! Lord, in mercy to the rising generation, continue a constant succession of holy and useful men, who shall not count their lives dear unto themselves, when they may be spent for Thy sake!

## A LETTER

FROM MR. JOHN NELSON TO THE REV. JOHN  
WESLEY :

*Written when Methodism was in its Infancy in  
Yorkshire.*

DEAR FATHER IN THE LORD,

My most earnest prayers (with my best love) for you and your brother are, that God may prosper His work in your hands more and more, and make your souls as a watered garden. His right hand hath done great things in these parts, both in converting and finishing the work of faith with power. We have had three that died in triumph, since I gave your brother the last account. The first was of Baildon Society, who had been in a justified state about three years: she was very exact in observing all meetings as long as she was able. Her disorder was a consumption; in the beginning of which she had many conflicts and temptations: but for about ten weeks before she died, she was a monument of wonder to all that beheld her; for she did nothing but praise God, and tell what He had done for her soul, and exhorted all she saw to seek the Lord while He may be found, and went

praising Him out of this howling wilderness. The next was one of Halifax : several of our people were with her when she died, who had attended her in her illness, and said she was as great a witness for God as ever they saw in that place. She had enjoyed a sense of pardon about two years. The next was Mr. Farray, who died the 17th inst., in the seventy-third year of his age. He was a man of unstained character, and looked upon, by priest and people, to be the best Christian in that parish before he heard us. The minister of the chapel-of-ease often slept at his house, and strove to prejudice him and his family against the Methodists ; and this he had done so effectually, that when Mr. Ellison was buried, he would not come to his funeral, because I was to preach, though he was his brother-in-law. But it pleased God to strike with convictions all of his family that were at the funeral ; and afterwards his wife. His two sons and his daughter prevailed upon him to hear for himself, as they had done. The first time he came, I was preaching from blind Bartimeus. When I had done, he cried, and said, "I have been blind for threescore and ten years, and knew not but I was right till this day." From that time, he and all his house attended the word at all opportunities. As Mr. Merrick was preaching, he received a sense of God's love, and ever since had been steadfast, full of good works, ready to confess his blindness by nature, and the riches of God's love to him and to his house, in what company soever he came. He had three weeks' illness, which ended in his death, during which time I often visited him, to the satisfaction of my own soul ; for he was praising God in the midst of racking pain. At one of my visits, two of his brothers came to see him ; and he

declared to them, he had lived to the age of man before he knew for what end he was born, and why Christ was sent into the world. Then he broke out in tears of joy, and said, "What could God have done more for me and my family than He hath done? for He hath not left an hoof of us in Egyptian darkness. We are all His witnesses that He is a forgiving God. O, my brothers, seek that you may find Him to be so to you!" He desired me to preach over him when he was dead; and said, it might be a means to stir up some soul to seek salvation. This I did to a great multitude, from, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." It seemed to be a glorious season. O may we all praise God in behalf of His glorious witnesses, and tread in their steps, that our last end may be like theirs!

The stewards and trustees of the chapel we are building, and which is now slated, desire you to give them advice how the writings must be made, which are to convey the power into the hands of seven men, to be as trustees, and for what use the house and ground are to be employed; and, as it is intended for pious use, whether it must not be enrolled in Chancery. They desire you to send a copy of the deeds of some of the houses you have been concerned in, as soon as possible; for all is in the hands of one man, and if he should die, it would cause great confusion before things could be properly settled. We all desire an interest in your prayers, and your advice in this particular. God hath opened the hearts of the people beyond expectation; and we trust He will send help from some quarter, that we may finish what we have begun in His name. I am employed in hewing stone in the day-time, and at night calling sinners to the blood of Jesus. My

wife joins in love with me to you and your brother, and all the church of God in that place !

We think you are long in coming to see us. May God hasten you hither !

I am

Your unworthy son in the Gospel,  
JOHN NELSON.

BIRSTAL, YORKSHIRE, Aug. 29th, 1750.

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MR. NELSON, as a man, was lively, active, and strong, of great resolution and undaunted courage. In his natural state, he restrained not his corrupt desires ; and through the force of example was precipitated into the barbarous follies of the day, such as hunting, cock-fighting, bull-baiting, &c. ; yet, in all his transactions with men, he preserved the utmost punctuality.

As a Christian, his experience was clear and scriptural. Previously, however, to his conversion, he was restless and unhappy for some years : this increased into a deep conviction of sin. The Lord, by a chain of providences, brought him under the preaching of the Gospel, in Moorfields, London. He then saw that the way of salvation by Jesus was the only way to peace and rest. He was soon after enabled to believe to the saving of his soul. Great was the deliverance, and unspeakable the joy, when “Christ was formed in him the hope of glory.” From that time, he became a zealous defender of the salvation he experienced. Jesus, the only name given whereby we can be saved, was ever dear to

him; and his life appeared to be one continued act of faith. When called to preach the Gospel, he conferred not with flesh and blood. He knew, from experience, the depth of human depravity; and however innumerable the sins are which spring from this corrupt fountain, he also knew they must all fall before the Gospel, when received by faith. As he had sought salvation by works himself, he knew well how to distinguish between the form and the power of godliness; and to promote the latter, he laid the axe to the root of the tree. "Ye must be born again," was a common topic with him. As he knew the inseparable connexion between believing in Christ, and bringing forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness; so he was as careful to insist upon the latter as to preach the former: and his own life showed the excellence of raising the superstructure of holiness, as well as relying with implicit confidence on the "precious corner-stone laid in Zion." In short, though his language was plain, it was mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. The trumpet from his mouth did not give an uncertain sound. His natural understanding being strong, and aided by the influence of the Holy Spirit, he had the testimony of men of parts and learning, that he was "a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." From his views and experience of Gospel doctrines, he could, on the one hand, point the penitent to "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world;" while, on the other, he could, with pure, disinterested affection, declare to the believer, that "the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin;" knowing that "He saveth to the uttermost all those that come unto God by Him." And though God gave

him many living and dying witnesses, as seals to his ministry, he was convinced, in the midst of his success, that it was “not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord.”

Before any Circuits were formed, he went through Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Lancashire, and several other counties in England; travelling on foot, labouring with his own hands, with no other prospect than to make known the way of life to thousands that were dead in trespasses and sins, that the captives of Satan, and the slaves of sin, might enjoy the liberty of the sons of God.

This account shall conclude with an extract of a letter from Mrs. Fletcher, dated “November 28th, 1807:”—

“He was an extraordinary man for tenderness of conscience, watchfulness over his words, and especially for self-denial and rigid temperance. He made it a rule to rise out of bed about twelve o’clock, and sit up till two, for prayer and converse with God: then he slept till four; at which time he always rose. Many of his friends at Leeds observed him to be more lively, both in preaching and conversation, a few days before his death, than ever. The last day of his valuable life he dined with a friend in Leeds, and felt a return of the gout in his stomach. When he came home to the preaching-house, where he resided, he was seized with a loss of sight, and violent retching, which ended in apoplexy, and removed him to glory.”

THE LIFE  
OF  
MR. CHRISTOPHER HOPPER.

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WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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I WAS born at Low-Coalburne, in the parish of Ryton, in the county of Durham, on the 25th of December, 1722. Moses Hopper, my father, was a farmer; my mother, whose name was Ann, was daughter to George Barkiss, farmer, in the same county. They were both of good repute, and much attached to the Church of England, but strangers to vital religion.

My mother had nine children,—six sons and three daughters,—of whom I was the youngest. When I was about five years old, I was sent to school to one Mr. Alderson, a man of piety and good understanding, who taught those under his care, not only the branches of learning he professed, but the fear of God, and the first principles of religion. He catechised us twice every week, and made us attend the church every Lord's day, and all holidays appointed for public service. After I had learned to read, write, and understand a little of the mathematics, I lost my beloved master, who made a most awful exit. He had been, as I thought, more devout one week

than common. The Sabbath following he received the sacrament at Ryton church. Some days after, a few gentlemen, with fair words, persuaded him to play a civil game at cards; but afterwards he fell into great distress of mind, and could not properly attend his school, which was often left to the care of his eldest son and me. The spring following, after many sore conflicts, he sunk into deep despair, and then drowned himself.

This melancholy event made my heart tremble, and was a means of bringing some serious thoughts into my mind about heaven, hell, death, and judgment. I began to distinguish between vice and virtue, the godly and ungodly men. These impressions remained till I took a severe illness, which continued near two years, and reduced me to a mere skeleton. Mr. Foster, an eminent apothecary, who attended me, pronounced me incurable.

This alarmed me, and filled my heart with slavish fear. I judged it was high time to prepare for a future state; and, according to the light I had, began the business without delay. I read my Bible with much pleasure, prayer, and attention: the more I read it, the more I loved it. Many verses, and some favourite chapters which I understood best, made such a deep impression upon me that I soon had them by heart. The "Practice of Piety," "A Form of Prayers," and a "Psalm Book," were my library. I prayed and sung with fear, and some degree of joy. I had very slight notions of my depraved nature, and the sin of unbelief; but clear views of my actual transgressions. I had been addicted to swear when I was put out of humour; and to lie when I could gain anything by it, or cover or excuse a fault. I had been apt to pilfer

among the children when I could do it with a good grace.

I was very proud, and prone to anger; yea, of a cruel disposition. I took a diabolical pleasure in hanging dogs, worrying cats, and killing birds and insects, mangling and cutting them to pieces. One instance of my inhumanity I perfectly remember to this day: One evening, as I was returning from school with some of my friendly associates, we found a great number of frogs collected together in a marshy place; we proclaimed war against them; we armed ourselves with stones, and, with all the fury of little fiends, murdered the poor, innocent, defenceless creatures. We then left the field in great triumph; but God soon requited me. That night I dreamed I fell into a deep place full of frogs, and they seized on me from head to foot, and begun to eat the flesh off my bones. I was in great terror, and found exquisite pain until I awoke, sweating and trembling, and half dead with fear.

About this time my dear father died of a consumption: I hope, a true penitent. He was interred at Ryton church, with great solemnity, among his ancestors. I was then left to the care of my indulgent mother and brethren. Soon after my father's death, my eldest brother married; and they divided my father's farm, and the goods and chattels he left, amongst them: but I was neglected and overlooked, like one that did not belong to the family; but this did not give me the least concern. My disorder still continued with my convictions. I prayed, wept, and looked towards the hill of Sion. I found comfort, and a good hope through grace. I waited every day for my final dissolution, and longed to be with Christ. I loved God, the Redeemer, and all

mankind. I was happy. After some time, it pleased God to restore me to perfect health, beyond all human expectation. After my recovery, my mind was quickly drawn after the world again. I saw transitory objects in another point of view than I had done during the time of my illness. My love to God and religion, and my desires after another world, soon grew very cold. I quenched the Holy Spirit, who departed, and left me again to the folly of my own heart.

As I was the youngest child of the family, and had nothing left me, I judged it would be proper to think of some business to procure bread; and my mother and brother being willing to put me to the grammar-school, and give me a good education, I accepted the offer, and concluded it was the best thing I could do; but, in the interim, one Mr. Armstrong, a shop-keeper, wanted a boy, and sent for me. I embraced the opportunity, and prepared to go without delay. I thought I should escape the wearisome task of study, having nothing to do but to improve the learning I had already to qualify me for a merchant's apprentice. My mother accompanied me to Mr. Armstrong's, and put me in possession of my new place. I went with great pleasure, and met with a kind reception. After I had been some time on trial, I was to be bound by indenture for seven years. This put my youthful mind into a new chain of reasoning. I thought I would never be bound to stand so long behind a counter: therefore, in spite of all persuasion, I left my place, and returned home.

After this, a project entered into my head that I would be a musician. I told my brother; he approved of it, bought me a violin, and provided me

a master. I began with great assiduity, and concluded I had found the very thing that would make me happy. I played away all my convictions, lost my taste for spiritual things, and banished all thoughts of a future world. I now employed myself in doing some little things in the house and about the farm ; and all the time I had to spare I spent in playing, singing, dancing, fishing, fowling, and whatever came next to my hand. I was then between fifteen and sixteen years of age, and began to think of some employment whereby I might have money to support my foolish desires. My brother kept wagon-horses. When the wagon-ways were first framed between the new coal-mines and the river Tyne, the farmers were under an obligation to their landlords to employ a certain number of horses for that purpose. I was a strong, active young man, and thought I could manage a wagon very well. My brother was willing I should make the trial, and gave me a proper horse for that service. I soon made a great proficiency in this slavish and dangerous occupation, and I was hugely pleased with my new department. Novelty pleases, whether the man sits on a throne or a dunghill. I frequently boasted of my strength, agility, and skill in this sphere of action ; and thought I was arrived at the summit of my preferment. I found it a singular pleasure, in whatever company I was, to talk of feeding and guiding wagon-horses ; of wagons and wagon-ways ; the nature and value of coals ; and concluded I only wanted a little money to make me a fitter or a London crimp. My vain mind was as much taken up with those things as the mathematicians with their abstruse science, or the philosophers with the wonders of nature. I followed this

business, and the various branches of agriculture, for about five years. During this period of my life I was given up to folly. I greedily pursued, according to my ability, all the pleasures of the world. I spent nights and days together in hunting, cocking, card-playing, horse-races, or whatever the devil brought to town or country; and, O grief of heart! gentlemen, clergymen, mechanics, and peasants made up the crowd. But in the enjoyment of these poor toys, I had many severe checks and sorrowful moments. The universe appeared as a vault, wherein true comfort was entombed; and the sun himself as a lamp to show the gloomy horrors of a guilty mind. I often said in my cool intervals, "Hath the great God of love provided no better things than these for His reasonable creatures?" Now, at this time I was my own master, and lived without control. I followed my former pleasures, but with a trembling hand. I found Satan's service perfect drudgery, and all earthly objects empty and vain.

In this dull, melancholy round I dragged on for some time, without any real comfort or solid satisfaction. I was not happy; yet I believed there was something that could make me so, but I knew not what it was, or where to find it. Sometimes I reflected on what I felt in my affliction when I was a youth; but it appeared as a dream. I was frequently in great and imminent danger; but through the interposition of a kind, unerring Providence, I escaped ten thousand snares and deaths, by night and day, at home and abroad. One evening in particular, two of my companions and I were riding home in a wagon very jovially, and as we were passing over a very high battery, the horse started suddenly to one side, and snatched the wagon from

the planks : immediately it overset, and turned over and over to the bottom of the hill. The trembling spectators who beheld this awful event concluded, with shrieks and cries, “They are all killed ; their bones are broken in a thousand pieces.” But, to their great astonishment, and our unspeakable comfort, we were very little hurt.

After I had recovered my reason, and found I was alive and out of hell, my stubborn heart yielded to my Almighty Deliverer. I feared His great name, wept for joy, and was overwhelmed with grief for my folly. This deliverance wrought a deep conviction in my heart. The true light shined on my dark soul, and God laid me in the dust. I only wanted a spiritual guide to show me the way ; but, alas ! I could not find him in the country.

In May, 1742, we heard a strange report of one Wesley, a Church clergyman, that had been at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and had preached in Sandgate to many thousands, who heard him with astonishment. This new thing made a huge noise. The populace entertained various conjectures about him ; but few, if any, could tell the motive on which he came, or the end he had in view. He made a short blaze, soon disappeared, and left us in a great consternation. Some time after, his brother Charles came, and preached at Tanfield Cross. I ran with the multitude to hear this strange preacher : when I saw a man in a clergyman’s habit, preaching at a public cross to a large auditory, some gaping, some laughing, and some weeping, I wondered what this could mean. When he had concluded, some said, “He is a good man, and is sent to reform our land ;” others said, “Nay, he is come to pervert and deceive us, and we ought to stone him out of our coasts.” I

said, “If he is a good man, good will be done, and it is plain we want a reformation; but if he is an imposter, he can only leave us as he found us, that is, without hope and without God in the world.” I cannot tell what induced me to go so far; but I found I was in danger of being called a Methodist, and was glad to dismiss the conversation with a smile and a piece of drollery.

In November Mr. Wesley returned to Newcastle, formed a religious society, and laid the foundation of the Orphan House. At the same time, he visited Tanfield-Leigh, Wickham, Swalwell, and Horsley. His name was then well known in town and country.

All mouths were filled with Wesley and his followers; some for and many against them. I knew very little of the matter, but thought it was most prudent to join the general voice against this “new way.”

The spring following, 1743, John Brown, a plain farmer, removed from Tanfield-Leigh to the Low-Spenn, and invited Mr. Wesley to his house. I then heard occasionally those preachers, who, I thought, could tell their story well, without stammering; but still found much fault with this strange method of proceeding. At this time there was a great clamour about religion among all sects and parties, and I made a bustle among the rest. I said, “I will read my Bible, say my prayers, go to my own parish-church, reform my life, and be good and pious, without the scandal of the cross.” Alas! I did not consider, “No cross, no crown.”

I hobbled on in this lame, ignorant manner, till at last I became deeply serious. I saw there was more in religion than I enjoyed or understood. I saw that God had been striving with me from my infant days. I looked back with astonishment on His loud calls,

compassionate helps, tender mercies, and great deliverances. He had raised me from the gates of death, when all human help failed. He had saved me from perils and dangers by night and by day. He had richly provided for me when I was left to myself very young. A sight of these favours raised in my cold heart some sensations of gratitude to my bountiful Benefactor. I said in my heart, "Shall I still trifle with the Almighty God of heaven and earth? Shall I fly in the face of my infinite Creator? Shall I play with eternal things? Will God always strive with the children of men? My few days are passing away like a shadow; pale death is approaching; the Judge is standing at the door; eternity, eternity, is come. Alas! I am not ready. I am in my sins, unholy, unhappy, and therefore not prepared to die. I will now cry to God for mercy. He willeth not the death of a sinner. It is His pleasure to save me from sin, and the punishment due to it. He waits to be gracious, that His great name may be exalted. 'He is good to all, and His mercy is over all His works.' I am a monument of His sparing goodness; I will therefore look up, and hope in His word. Behold, this is the accepted time; behold, this is the day of salvation. God hath sent His servants to show poor sinners the way of life." I was then determined to hear and judge for myself. God had now prepared my heart for the reception of the truth. I said, "I will no longer be led by the laughing multitude, nor be deluded with the noise of vain tongues."

The Sabbath-day following, Mr. Reeves preached at the Low-Spenn, at one o'clock in the afternoon. I heard him with great attention, but found a veil on my heart. I did not clearly see God's method of

justifying a guilty sinner through faith in the blood of His Son.

In the evening he preached again, on these words, “And now abideth faith, hope, and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.” In his plain, pathetic manner he gave us a definition of these principal graces, with their inseparable concomitants, and showed the unspeakable happiness of all those who had a saving faith, a good hope, and the love of God. The word came home to my heart with energy. The veil was removed. The true light shined upon me; and I said, “Alas! I am undone. If these things are true, and doubtless they are, I have only the faith of a devil, the hope of a hypocrite, and the love of this present evil world.” My mouth was stopped. I stood guilty before God. He discovered to me the blessed plan of man’s redemption through the blood of a crucified Saviour. I saw God had fulfilled His great original promise. He sent His Son to save sinners, the chief of sinners. He lived, suffered, and died for a lost world. “He tasted death for every man. He gave Himself a ransom for all.” I said in my trouble, “The good Shepherd came from heaven to earth ‘to seek and save that which was lost, to bring again that which was driven away, to bind up that which was broken, and to strengthen that which was sick.’ But I am lost; I am driven to the mouth of hell, ready to drop into the flames; I am broken to pieces; I am sick of sin, sick of myself, and sick of a vain world: I will therefore look unto the Lord. My God will hear me; He hath died for me. I shall, yea, doubtless, I shall obtain mercy after all I have done. The God of truth hath promised mercy; the Son of His love hath procured mercy; the Spirit of truth is

ready to reveal mercy ; and the messengers of peace are come to proclaim mercy, free mercy, to every perishing sinner, through the blood of the everlasting covenant." I said, "I can, I will, I do believe in the only true God, and in Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. I am freely justified. I am saved through faith in the blood of the Lamb. God is now my God in Christ. The love of God is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost given unto me. The spirit of bondage is gone. The Spirit of adoption is come. I can now cry, 'Abba, Father.' The same Spirit beareth witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. No enmity ; no wrath ; no curse ; no condemnation :—the ruined sinner is saved." I then found a glorious and undeniable change. God, Christ, angels, men, heaven, earth, and the whole creation appeared to me in a new light, and stood related to me in a manner I never knew before. I found love to my God, to His yoke, to His cross, to His saints, and to His friends and enemies. I said, "This is Bible religion, scriptural Christianity : let men call it what they please,—'a delusion,' 'enthusiasm,' 'Methodism,' or 'Mahometanism,'—that is nothing to me ; hard names do not change the nature of the thing." I then went on my way rejoicing ; a wonder to my father's family, to all that knew me, and to myself. All my idols fell to the ground before the ark of God. I found a perfect hatred to sin, and a complete victory over it.

The whole tenor of my life and conversation was new. Free grace, infinite mercy, boundless love made the change. My heart, my tongue, my hands, were now, in my little way, employed for my loving God. I was no longer of the world ; therefore the world began immediately to hate me. Some said, "Ah !

what think you? Christopher Hopper is converted." Others said, "He hath received the Holy Ghost." Others said, "He is mad; keep far from him; come not near his habitation." Some, of a more compassionate turn, pitied me; but all agreed I had renounced my baptism, left the Church, and was in a dangerous situation.

Soon after Mr. Wesley came to Low-Spenn, formed a little society, and made me a leader, to help and watch over them. I was but a novice, a young, raw disciple, unskilled in the word of righteousness; but faith in Christ, and the love of God in my heart, overcame all the powers of darkness. I found unspeakable pleasure in doing and suffering the will of God. I laboured diligently with my hands; I owed no man anything; I had enough for myself, and a little to spare for others; I attended four or five meetings every week; we prayed, sung psalms and hymns, read the Bible, and exhorted one another to fear and love God. The power of the Lord was present to heal; He owned His own work, and gave us prosperity. Many of my old companions were awokened; also my poor old mother, one of my sisters, and one of my brothers, who had been a champion in the devil's cause, but has been an ornament to religion from that time to this day.\* The fire now kindled, and the flame spread. I had one invitation after another, to High-Spenn, Barlow, Woodside, Predhoe, Newlands, Blanchland, Durham, Sunderland, and many other places.

As yet, I had not examined my call to preach the Gospel, nor considered the consequences of such an undertaking. I was sweetly carried on with a strong prevailing influence, and a loving desire to promote

\* He died in the Lord some years ago.

the glory of God. I saw the world dead in trespasses and sins, void of light, holiness, and happiness. I therefore thirsted after their salvation, and thought it my duty to promote it. God blessed His word. Sinners were turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. But the devil was highly displeased. He saw his kingdom was in danger, and immediately proclaimed war against me.

I met with great persecution, many discouragements, and much opposition in every place. Men of all ranks used their power and influence to stop this blessed work of God. They spoke all manner of evil against the work, and the instruments employed therein. They dispensed with two or three awakened clergymen tolerably well: these were regularly ordained, men of learning, gentlemen, and divines; but to see a ploughman, or an honest mechanic, stand up to preach the Gospel, it was insufferable. Hell was moved from beneath; a council was called; the edict came forth, and war commenced.

Laymen and ecclesiastics joined heart and hand to suppress these pestilent fellows; not with acts of kindness, Scripture, or reason; but invectives and lies, dirt, rotten eggs, brickbats, stones, and cudgels: these were Satan's arguments in vindication of his own cause. It was the common cry in town and country, "Press them for soldiers; send them on board a man-of-war; transport them; beat them; stone them; send them to prison, or knock out their brains, and dispatch them at once; for there is no law for them."\*

Several of my fellow-sufferers had shared honest

\* This was a great mistake: there was law for us; but we could not find a magistrate who had courage or honesty enough to put it in force.

John Nelson's fate already ; and I expected to be the next. They had their eyes on me ; they daily pursued me as Saul did David ; they waited for an opportunity to seize on the prey : but the hand of the Lord was with me ; so I escaped. He delivered me by various means, at sundry times, and often in a very remarkable manner.

Once in particular, as I was preaching at Wickham, to a quiet, attentive congregation, the constable came with his attendants to apprehend me ; they guarded the door, and stood with fierce impatience to seize me. When I had concluded, I stepped down, went through the midst of them, was conveyed through a window, and went quietly home, leaving the peace-officer and his gentlemen to end the dispute with loud words, hard blows, and bloody faces.

When I first set out to do all the good I could, without fee or reward, I did not foresee this violent storm. I began now to consider what latitude I was in ; and whether it would not be a point of wisdom to tack about, and steer for some quiet harbour.

There had been many things said and written against this “ new way ; ” especially against those illiterate preachers who so exceedingly disturbed the world. I found some doubts concerning my call to the work, and almost wished they might be well grounded, that I might with a good conscience desist from preaching.

I was therefore determined to examine myself, whether I had a right to preach, or whether I had rashly entered into a work that did not belong to me. One evening I went into a wood by the side of Derwent-water, much dejected. Clouds and darkness surrounded me, and my spirit was troubled within me. I said, “ My enemies are too strong for

me ; there are few on the Lord's side, but myriads against Him. What shall I do ? Alas ! ' My family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.' ' I am a worm, and no man.' O my God, let me enjoy this sweet solitude, and see my friends and companions no more ! Let me live as a hermit in this lonely desert, till my few days are ended : then shall my weary spirit be at rest."

I did not want ease, wealth, or honour, but to know, do, and suffer the will of my Lord and Master. I thought, " If I have made a mistake, God will forgive me, and I will take shame to myself. I will desist from preaching, and live and die a private Christian. But if God hath called me to publish the Gospel of His dear Son, I must bear a public testimony, and leave the event to Him."

In the midst of these reflections, it occurred to my mind, " What evidence is sufficient to satisfy me in this weighty matter ? I only want a rational, scriptural evidence. Let me, then, inquire with prayer and fasting, what reason have I to believe that I am called to preach the Gospel ? "

1. I have heard and believed the Gospel, and found it to be the power of God to the salvation of my own soul, (Rom. i. 16,) and I believe it to be the powerful means which God hath appointed to reclaim and save lost sinners. 2. I believe all power is given to Jesus Christ in heaven and in earth ; therefore He alone hath power and authority to call, qualify, and thrust out labourers into His own harvest. (Matt. xxviii. 18.) Hence I learn that this power cannot be acquired by human art or learning, or purchased with gold or silver. (Acts viii. 20.) 3. I believe those who are called and put into this work by Him shall turn sinners from darkness to

light, and from the power of Satan to God. (Acts xxvi. 18.) 4. I have a rational conviction that God hath committed unto me the word of reconciliation. (2 Cor. v. 19.) I have this treasure in an earthen vessel, in a feeble, mortal body; (2 Cor. iv. 7;) that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of man. I find, by daily experience, "we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." (2 Cor. iii. 5.) 5. According to this conviction I have preached the Gospel to sinners dead in sin, and they have been awakened and converted to God. Children of the devil are become children of God, and heirs of eternal life.

Having considered these things, I concluded my call to preach the Gospel was consistent with Scripture, reason, and experience. I was filled with joy: I said, "I have now the countenance of my God; the hands of His dear Son, the Bishop of my soul, laid upon me; the approbation of three presbyters sent by Him; the prayers of His dear people; the testimony of a good conscience, and the pleasure of seeing Sion prosper. I therefore pray earnestly that God may incline, persuade, and sweetly influence my heart, and open my mouth by His Holy Spirit, to dispense the word of truth to a world of perishing sinners. This I desire to do continually, in season and out of season, according to the ability He hath given me." My drooping spirit now revived. The fear of men and devils departed from me, and I set out with double courage. I could say, "Jehovah is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? Jehovah is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, "Cry aloud, and spare not; lift up thy

voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." My heart replied, "For Sion's sake, I will not hold my peace; and for Jerusalem's sake, I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." The Lord was with me night and day; His threatenings passed over me; His promises comforted me; and His precepts were my delight. I could say,

"To me, with Thy dear name, is given  
Pardon, and holiness, and heaven."

In the year 1744 I taught a school at Barlow in the parish of Ryton. My time was employed six days in teaching the children under my care the branches of learning I professed, and the first principles of Christianity.

I spent every Sabbath, and all my vacant hours, in preaching, reading, praying, visiting the sick, and conversing with all that Providence put in my way. God was with me, and blessed my weak labours. Sinners were converted, believers multiplied, and my soul rejoiced in God my Saviour.

But Satan did not like this work: therefore he stirred up the rector of Ryton and his curate, with those under their influence, to prevent me. They gave me first hard words, and then hard blows.

In a little time I was summoned to appear in the Spiritual Court at Durham, to answer for my conduct. I did not know what I had done; but was soon informed that I was impeached for teaching a school without a licence; and, what was still worse, for calling sinners to repentance, and warning the wicked to flee from the wrath to come,—an offence that cannot be overlooked by men who know not God! But God

raised me up friends, who stood by me, and defended my cause against all my adversaries.

After this troublesome affair was ended, I met with a trial of another kind. Before I was awakened I was deeply in love with one Jane Richardson, a farmer's daughter, and an agreeable young woman. She was my first love, and had laid fast hold on my youthful heart. She had every accomplishment I wanted, but religion ! Alas ! she was unacquainted with God. This was a bar indeed ! I found a desire to break off all correspondence with her, but was afraid she could not bear it. I was greatly troubled, and prayed for Divine direction. God was pleased to hear and grant my request. She was soon awakened, and found peace with God. All objections being removed, on May the 28th, 1745, we were joined together in Ryton church. She was a loving wife, a faithful friend, and a very agreeable companion. She made my joys and sorrows her own. We worshipped God in spirit and truth, and rejoiced in the Son of His love.

The same evening I preached at the Low-Spenn. The Lord was with us, and we praised His name together. We lived a few months with my wife's friends at the Smeals, near Derwent, in a most loving, agreeable manner. God made us of one heart and mind, and united our souls together by one spirit in humble love.

In the year 1746 I removed from Barlow to the preaching-house at Sheephill. I received the preachers and my other religious friends with much pleasure. My heart was open ; my door was open ; and my little table free for strangers. I gave up my soul, body, and substance to my adorable Saviour, and grieved I had no more to give.

I commonly preached, or met a class, every evening after I had dismissed my scholars. I preached twice or thrice, and often four times, every Sabbath-day. When I had a day or two to spare from my present vocation, I visited Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, and many other towns and villages, ten, twenty, or thirty miles round. Herein I met with much opposition, and was frequently in great jeopardy. Indeed, I did not much regard a little dirt, a few rotten eggs, the sound of a cow's horn, the noise of bells, or a few snowballs in their season ; but sometimes I was saluted with blows, stones, brickbats, and bludgeons. These I did not well like : they were not pleasing to flesh and blood.

I sometimes lost a little skin, and once\* a little blood, which was drawn from my forehead with a sharp stone. I wore a patch a few days, and was not ashamed ; I gloried in the cross. And when my small sufferings abounded for the sake of Christ, my comfort abounded much more. I never was more happy in my own soul, or more blessed in my labours.

The latter end of July, 1747, I had a call to visit Cornwood, and met with a kind reception. I preached several times among the people called Quakers. I hope good was done.

On my return, I had an invitation to preach at Allendale-town. A great congregation attended, who behaved well, and heard the word gladly. The latter end of December I visited Allendale again. A glorious work broke out. The Lord stretched out His hand to save sinners. Mr. Topping, minister of that place, used all his art, power, and influence to

\* It was at Sunderland, in the midst of an outrageous mob of sailors.

stop it ; but he could do nothing. His strength was perfect weakness against the Lord.

I went from town to town, and from house to house, singing, praying, and preaching the word ; and great multitudes followed from place to place, weeping, and seeking Him that was crucified. Great numbers were awakened, and found peace with God, through the blood of the Lamb. I have frequently seen a whole congregation melted into tears, and bowed down before the Lord, as the heart of one man : especially once, when I was preaching in Mr. Lowe's old barn, at Dod-bank, the Lord manifested His great power. He wrought for the glory of His own name ; and I stood still and looked on, with loving fear and wonder.

In the year 1748 I gave up my school at Sheep-hill, and everything that was comfortable and convenient, and removed to Hindley-hill, in Allendale. I lodged with honest James Broadwood, and was as one of his family. The presence of the Lord dwelt in his house, and we lived in peace and unity. I formed a society at Hindley-hill, another at West-allen ; one at Alesdon, and one at Ninthead. The Lord was among them of a truth. I had now work enough, and God's blessing on my labour. In the latter end of this year I visited Weardale. Some of the brethren attended me from Allendale.

It was in a storm of snow that we crossed the quagmires and enormous mountains. When we came into the Dales, we met with a very cold reception. The enemy had barricaded the place, and made his bulwarks strong. But the Lord made way for His truth. He opened the heart of a poor Scotch shepherd to receive us into his little thatched cabin, where we lodged all night.

The next day I preached under the walls of an old castle. A few children and two or three old women attended, who looked hard at us. When I had done, we followed them into their houses, and talked freely to them in their own language, about the kingdom of God. They heard, and obeyed the Gospel. The next evening I had a large congregation, who heard with much attention, and received the word gladly. Some time after, I preached in private houses, ale-houses, cock-pits, or wherever I could find a door open. The fire then spread from heart to heart, and God was glorified.

This was the beginning of a good work in Wear-dale, which has continued and increased to this day.

The spring following, in the year 1749, I began teaching a school near Hindley-hill. But the work of God so increased in my hands, that I could not properly attend it: therefore, in the latter end of the year, I gave it up, with all other secular employments, and cast myself on the bounty of my Lord and Master.

My little substance soon failed, and I saw nothing before me but beggary and great afflictions. Sometimes I was carried above all earthly objects, and had a comfortable view of the heavenly country. At other times I was much depressed, and could see nothing but poverty and distress.

I well remember, once on the top of a cold mountain in a violent storm of snow, when the congealed flakes covered me with a white mantle, Satan assaulted me, and pushed me hard to return to my school, or some other business to procure bread. I staggered through unbelief, and almost yielded to the tempter. But as the attack was sudden, so the battle was soon over. The Lord sent these words to

my heart like lightning : “ When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything ? And they said, Nothing, Lord.” (Luke xxii. 35.) I answered with a loud voice, “ Nothing, Lord ! nothing, Lord ! ” All my doubts and fears vanished in a moment, and I went on my way rejoicing !

“ Constrain’d to cry by love Divine,  
My God, Thou art for ever mine ! ”

Since that time I have been richly supplied with all good things. This day I am full. I have all, and abound. Praise God and the Lamb for ever !

The work now begun to spread in the Dales, Hexhamshire, North-Tyne, and soon reached White-haven.

And now God raised up many preachers ; men, eminent both for gifts and graces. Some of them continued to be local, and some became itinerant, preachers. The latter end of the year 1749\* I left the Dales, and the dear children God had given me. I rode to the Smeals, where I parted with my dear wife and friends, with melting hearts and many tears.

In those days we had no provision made for preachers’ wives, no funds, no stewards. He that had a staff might take it, go without, or stay at home.

I then set out for Bristol. I called at Chester, Durham, Stockton, Thirsk, and Knaresborough, and found the Lord in every place. I spent a few days at Leeds. Here God opened my mouth to speak His word, and I hope good was done.

I preached at Birstal, on the top of the hill, before

\* From this period, I shall only give a short sketch of my travels, and now and then mention a small incident.

the foundation of the preaching-house was laid. Large congregations attended, and the power of the Lord was present to heal. I rode on to Halifax, and found their little society at Skircoat-green. God gave us a blessing. I then rode to Rochdale, and preached in the evening at the widow Whitaker's, to as many as the house could contain. They were turbulent enough: but we were not afraid; for God was with us. Next day I rode to Manchester, and preached that evening in a little garret by the river side.\* The congregation multiplied every meeting. On the Sabbath-day the old place would not contain them. The multitude was impatient to hear. The old wooden house shook under us, and put the congregation in confusion. Many trembled, and some believed. The next evening they procured me a Baptist meeting-house. The place was crowded. They heard with attention. Many were awakened, and joined themselves to seek and worship God. They immediately bought a piece of ground, and laid the foundation of their first preaching-house. I rode through Cheshire, and joined a society at Alphraham, and another at Pool. It was an humbling time among the opulent farmers; the murrain raging amongst their cattle. They buried them in the open fields. Their graves were a solemn scene. The hand of the Lord was on the land. I visited the suburbs of Chester. God begun a good work then, which has increased and continued to this day. I preached at Birmingham, Evesham, Stroud, and Kingswood; and then rode to Bristol, where I spent a few days, and I hope not in vain.

† What has God wrought in Manchester since that day! The little one is become a thousand!

March 20th, 1750.—I set out with Mr. Wesley for Ireland. We crossed the New Passage into Wales, and reached Cardiff before night.

21st.—We rode to Brecknock through heavy rain. Mr. Wesley's mare fell twice, and threw him over her head; but without any hurt to man or beast.

22d.—We rode to Builth. A congregation waited for Howell Harris, but he did not come at the time appointed; so, at their request, Mr. Wesley preached. I then spoke a few words. It was a time of love. The Welsh brethren rejoiced in the Lord. We then rode to Machynlleth, and then to Dolgelly, wet and weary enough.

24th.—We rode to Tan-y-bwlch. It rained incessantly all the way. Our horses were tired, and we were ready to faint; but God was our strength, and we rejoiced in our little toil.

25th.—We rode to Baldon-ferry. Mr. Jenkin Morgan came to the water-side, crossed over with us into the isle of Anglesey, and then conducted us to his house, half-way between the ferry and Holyhead.

Sunday, 26th.—Mr. Wesley preached at Howell Thomas's, in Trevorllwyd parish; in the afternoon, at William Pritchard's. The people understood no English; but their looks, sighs, and gestures showed God was speaking to their hearts.

We then went to lodge with one Mr. Holiday, an exciseman, who lived in a quiet, solitary place, where no human voice was heard, but those of the family.

Wednesday, 29th.—We rode to Holyhead, and sent back our horses with John Jane, who had travelled from Bristol to the Head with three shillings, and had one penny left. About eleven o'clock, we went on board. As soon as we sailed,

we had wind and rain enough without, and a violent storm in the ship. Mr. Griffith, of Caernarvonshire, a clumsy, hard-faced man, saluted us with a volley of ribaldry, obscenity, and blasphemy; but God stopped his mouth, and he was confounded.

Thursday, 30th.—We wrought our way four leagues towards Ireland, but we were driven back in the afternoon to the mouth of the harbour. The wind then shifted two points, and we ventured out again. By midnight we were got half-way over; but the wind, turning full against us, and blowing hard, soon brought us back into the bay again. Mr. Wesley preached that evening on the history of Dives and Lazarus, to a room full of men decked with gold and silver; but they were soon satisfied with it, and went away murmuring. After they were gone, we had a comfortable meeting with a few plain Welshmen.

Saturday, 31st.—We were determined to wait one week longer, if the wind did not serve before. Mr. Wesley preached in the evening. Captain Griffith, with his dear gentlemen, made noise enough; but our God delivered us.

April 1st.—We returned to Mr. Holiday's, called at William Pritchard's, then went to Llanerell Ymadd; but the sons of Belial would not suffer us to enter the place.

Thursday, 5th.—Mr. Wesley preached near the town to a few precious souls, who heard and obeyed the word.

Friday, 6th.—The wind came fair; so we rode to Holyhead early in the morning, embarked with a fair wind, and, in the evening, landed at Dublin. I spent a few days in that city, and, I hope, not in vain. I then visited Portarlington, Edinderry,

Mountmellick, Tyrrel's-pass, Athlone, Birr, and Aghrim, and found the Lord was with me in every place. I had great crosses, but greater comforts. I then rode to Dublin, and spent a few days there with much satisfaction.

July 22d.—I embarked with Mr. Wesley for England. We sailed about ten in the morning, and in the afternoon came to an anchor.

Monday, 23d.—We had a vehement squall of wind, thunder, and lightning between the Welsh sands and the rocky shore of Lundy. We cried to the Lord in our trouble, and He delivered us out of our distress.

Tuesday, 24th.—The wind was contrary. It blew a storm. The seas ran mountain-high. We were tossed in a narrow channel, full of shoals, rocks, and sands. We prayed for help: our God heard, and brought us safe to Pill.

The next day I came to Bristol, where I spent a few days with pleasure, and then set out for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. I visited the societies in my way, and they refreshed me in the love of Jesus.

I spent a few weeks at and about Newcastle. My dear friends were glad to see me. We rejoiced together. I then set out for Whitehaven, where I had a good season. The Lord crowned my weak labours with success. About the latter end of the year I left Whitehaven, rode to Cockermouth, then to Penrith, and the next day came to Hindley-hill. I took a fever in my journey; but rode on to Newlands, where I took my bed. My dear wife met me with joy and grief. She soon caught the disorder, and we continued sick for many weeks.

We lodged with Mr. George Hunter, a friendly man. God richly provided all things for us. He

blessed us in our sickness, and restored us to health. Praised be His name for ever !

In the spring, 1751, I set out for Bristol. I met with honest John Nelson at Leeds. We rode on together with some other preachers. We spoke freely to all that Providence put in our way ; and God blessed our labours. We rode through heavy rains, and rapid floods ; but the Lord preserved both man and beast, and brought us to our journey's end in peace.

Monday, March 11th.—Our Conference began at Bristol. The more we conversed, the more our love increased to God and one another. We kept to our first doctrines, and were of one heart and one mind.

I then returned to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, visiting the brethren in my way. I preached every evening at seven, and every morning at five o'clock, and often at noon-day, the common work of a Methodist preacher.

Monday, April 22d.—I set out with Mr. Wesley for Scotland. We rode to Alnwick. Our friends received us with joy. We praised God together.

Wednesday, 23d.—We rode to Berwick. Mr. Wesley preached at a young man's funeral, who had been cut off suddenly. It was a solemn time. Many heard for eternity.

Thursday, 24th.—We rode to Old-Camus, through a Scotch mist. We rode past Preston-field, saw the place of battle, and Colonel Gardiner's house. Here that good man, and brave soldier, fought and died for his king and country. We then rode on to Musselborough, where Mr. Wesley preached in a large school to a company of wise men, so called.

Friday, 20th.—We rode back to Berwick. I left Mr. Wesley, and the week following returned to Musselborough, where I spent a few days. I

preached night and morning to a large congregation, who heard with great attention. This was the beginning of a good work in Scotland. Some years after, I preached at Edinburgh, Dunbar, Leith, Dundee, and Aberdeen. God blessed His word, and raised up witnesses to testify that He had sent us to the North Britons also.

In 1752 I set out, with my wife, for Whitehaven, where I spent a few days with pleasure and profit to myself and others. We then embarked for Ireland ; and, after a tedious voyage, landed at Dublin. I spent a few weeks in that city, and then rode to Cork, where I spent the winter with joy and sorrow. We had warm work in that city for a long time ; but the word of the Lord prevailed, and silenced the enemy.

In the spring I returned to Dublin, and met my wife and friends, who had just escaped the fire of a very hot persecution. This year I had many blessings and crosses, both by sea and land.

“I'll praise my God with every breath :  
O let me die to see Thy day !  
Now snatch me from this life of death :  
O come, my Saviour, come away !”

In the year 1753 I left Dublin, and embarked for England. We landed at Whitehaven. I first visited the Dales, then rode to Newcastle ; and the Lord was with us of a truth.

In the year 1754 I embarked at North-Shields for London. May 22d, our Conference began. It was a time of love.

In June I embarked for Newcastle. I had a quick and pleasant passage. I preached to the ship's company, who heard the word with joy. I landed at Shields, and then came to the Orphan-House, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where we praised God and the

Lamb, with one heart and voice, for mercies we had received.

May 9th, 1755.—Our Conference began at Leeds. The first question was, Whether we ought to separate from the Church of England. After many deep and serious conversations, we concluded that it was not *expedient* for many reasons.

I then set out again for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. As I was passing through Chapeltown, I got a dreadful fall from my horse. My foot was much hurt, but all my bones were preserved. Glory be to God and the Lamb! I rode with much pain to Newcastle, but enjoyed great peace and a calm resignation to the Divine will. This I believe was a gracious dispensation, and was sent to humble me, and prepare me for a greater trial.

August 15th.—My dear wife took a fever. She had great pain, and heavy affliction for about ten days, together with many violent temptations. But she enjoyed perfect peace, and was fully resigned to the will of her heavenly Father. At last she triumphed over death, and without a doubt, a sigh, or a groan, breathed out her happy soul into the arms of her adorable Redeemer!

On the 28th Mr. Massiot preached her funeral sermon to a very large congregation of true mourners. The same evening she was interred, amongst her ancestors, in Ryton church. She was an agreeable, affectionate wife, a constant friend, and a pious, humble Christian. She is now in paradise, and I am left to mourn.

“ O may our heart and mind  
Continually ascend,  
That haven of repose to find  
Where all our labours end;

Where all our grief is o'er,  
Our sufferings and our pain :  
Who meet on that eternal shore  
Shall never part again."

In July, 1756, I set out for Bristol. Our Conference began August 26th. It was a good season.

September 15th.—I once more embarked for Ireland, with Mr. Murlin, Olivers, Gilbert, and Massiot. On the 19th we were within sight of land, and, being well satisfied with a tedious and dangerous passage, we left the ship, and got into a fishing-boat; and, after rowing very hard for some hours, landed at Robertson's Cove, about twenty miles from Cork. We were poor strangers now in a strange land, among a people of a strange language! There was not one inn or private house in the little village that could give us a night's lodging. It was a gloomy time. The day was gone, and we stood looking one at another, like a company of poor prisoners. In these circumstances God sent us an honest farmer, who was a Papist; and he took us home to his house in the country, and showed us great kindness. We lodged that night in the midst of our enemies; but the Lord suffered no man to hurt us. The next morning our kind host provided us horses, and sent a servant to conduct us safe to Cork.

Here we met with a kind reception. Our friends rejoiced with us, and praised God for all our deliverances. I lodged with old Mr. Massiot, who kept a house too well provided for pilgrims. I spent a few days in that city, preached night and morning, and visited the brethren from house to house. I hope good was done.

I then set out for Dublin, where I spent my winter with pleasure and profit.

The spring following I returned to Cork, where I spent about two months. I found much satisfaction, but not without temptations. I met with reproaches and many cruel mockings; but found that Spirit resting upon me, which gave me victory over reproach and shame.

I then rode to Limerick, where I spent a few weeks. I met with some severe trials in that city; but God delivered me. I then set out for Dublin. I found my body and mind very weak, yet not without many kind visits from my Lord.

In autumn I took a sore fever. Doctor Rutty, that venerable and wise physician, attended me faithfully, without fee or reward. He thought my labours under the sun were ended. I bade farewell to the world. I was kept in perfect peace, patient and resigned to the will of my heavenly Father. I had comfortable and clear views of paradise, and a world of happy spirits. When to all appearance I was just on the brink of eternity, I fell into a sweet rest, and dreamed I was dead, and saw all things prepared for my funeral, and that my spirit was with Christ, in a state of unspeakable happiness; but was sent back again to call a few more sinners to repentance.

I then awoke, my fever was gone, and from that moment I began to recover. My strength of body soon returned, and the Lord sent me forth with a fresh commission.

I laboured in Ireland till July, 1758, and then embarked for England, with Mr. Johnson, Greenwood, and Gilbert. We had a fine gale, and soon landed at Parkgate. I then rode to Bristol. Our Conference began August 10th. It was a good season. God crowned our meeting with love and unanimity.

The latter end of September I arrived once more

at the Orphan-House, without Pilgrim-street-gate, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. My good old friends were glad to see me, and received me as one raised from the dead.

In the latter end of this year I had some thoughts of changing my life again. I prayed for Divine direction, and took the advice of some of my dear friends. One who loved me, and wished me well, recommended to me an agreeable person of a fair character ; and on April 17th, 1759, we were married at St. Andrew's, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. God made His face to shine upon us, and blessed us, and amply rewarded me for all my days of mourning. He doubly restored to me all spiritual and temporal blessings. This was a day of prosperity : therefore I thought it a day of great danger.

I was now favoured with an agreeable, loving companion, a good house, a pleasant situation, and all things to make life easy and comfortable. I must confess I found a desire to settle ; but not to leave my Master's work. I began a little business, and had now a fair opportunity to step into the world ; but my Lord would not suffer me. He showed me that His good work would bring me far more gain in the end than all the shops in Newcastle. So I set out for the north, and preached at Placey, Morpeth, Alnwick, Berwick, Dundee, Musselborough, Leith, New and Old Aberdeen, and Peterhead ; and then returned to Newcastle the same way.

I then set out for the London Conference, visited Canterbury and Dover, returned to London, and then rode back to Newcastle. In all those journeys I found the Lord was with me, and gave His word success.

In the year 1760 I again visited Scotland. The

work of the Lord prospered in our hands. Sinners were converted, mourners comforted, and saints built up in their most holy faith. We had now a fair prospect of a great harvest in North Britain, till men of corrupt minds stirred up the spirit of vain controversy : we then spent our time and strength about the meaning of words, instead of promoting the fear and love of God. My soul was troubled, and my spirit grieved within me, to see so many precious souls turned out of the way of holiness and happiness, by noisy disputes and foolish jangling. These men will blush in the last day who have done this great evil. Let me live with men of peace, who love God and the brethren, and enjoy the life of religion in their own souls.

April 28th, 1761.—Mr. Wesley came to Edinburgh, and the Lord gave His word success. Sinners heard with attention, and the saints rejoiced in God their Saviour.

I visited Dundee and Aberdeen, returned to Edinburgh, and from thence to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where God blessed His own word. I then set out with Mr. Wesley and several of the brethren for Durham. Mr. Wesley preached in a green field, by the river-side, to a very large auditory. One poor man was favoured with a stone, and lost a little blood ; but in the general they behaved tolerably well. I preached in the evening, in the same field, to a large congregation. A gentleman, so called, employed a base man to strip himself naked, and swim through the river to disturb the hearers ; but a good woman soon hissed him off the stage ; so he was glad to return by the way he came, with much disgrace. Mr. John Greenwood informed me afterwards, that the very gentleman who encouraged the

poor wretch above mentioned was some time after found drowned in the same river! O God, Thy judgments are unsearchable, and Thy ways past finding out!

In August I left Newcastle, and set out with my wife for London. It was a disagreeable journey, but God blessed and preserved us from all evil. September 1st our Conference began. Thence we set out for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where I spent my winter.

The latter end of July, 1762, we left Newcastle, and set out for Leeds. August 9th, our Conference began. I was stationed in that Circuit.

In July, 1763, I set out for London. Our Conference began and ended in love. I then set out for Scotland. I spent my winter in Edinburgh, Dunbar, and Berwick. We lived in a little dark room at Edinburgh, encompassed round with old black walls, disagreeable enough: but we had a good season; many poor sinners were converted to God. We saw the fruit of our labours, and rejoiced. My dear Edinburgh friends were very kind, especially Lady Gardiner, that good old saint, who is now with Jesus in paradise. Praise God for all His mercies!

In the year 1764 I continued labouring in Scotland. On June 1st I set out with Mr. Wesley and my wife for Aberdeen. We had a pleasant and profitable journey. This summer we laid the foundation of our octagon at Aberdeen. The Lord gave me success. Many precious souls were awakened, and added to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are enrolled in heaven.

November 13th.—We set out for Edinburgh, and rode to Dundee. The 15th we rode to Kinghorn, and the next morning crossed the Firth, and took

the stage to Edinburgh. Our friends received us with joy, and we praised God together.

In the year 1765 we laid the foundation of our octagon at Edinburgh. I met with much opposition and many discouragements. But the Lord was on my side, and helped me. I collected all I could, gave all I could spare, and borrowed above three hundred pounds to carry on and complete that building.

I preached on the foundation one Sabbath-day to a large congregation. The power of the Lord was present to heal, and many rejoiced to see that day. I preached every Lord's day on the Calton-hill, a large Golgotha, a place of a skull! By preaching so often in the cold air to very large auditories, with other difficulties and hard labours, I laid the foundation of a very dangerous disorder in my bowels, which baffled all the skill of physicians, and the virtue of medicine, for more than three years. But I could say,—

“ Let sickness blast, and death devour,  
If heaven will recompense our pains :  
Perish the grass, and fade the flower,  
Since firm the word of God remains.”

In July I set out for England. I spent a few days at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and then rode to Manchester. Our Conference began the 20th of August, and ended the 23d : God refreshed us. I visited the brethren, and then set out for the north.

In October, Mr. Alexander Coates died at the Orphan-House, in perfect peace. I saw him fall asleep in the arms of our adorable Saviour without a doubt. Farewell, my brother, for a season ! But we shall meet again to part no more.

In the year 1766 I laboured in Newcastle Circuit, but was very much indisposed. I was just worn out ; my bodily strength failed. I was on the verge of eternity. But, blessed be God, I enjoyed great tranquillity of mind, and very good spirits.

“Accepting my pain,  
I no longer complain,  
But wait till at last I the haven obtain.

“Till the storms are all o'er,  
And, afflicted no more,  
On a plank of the ship I escape to the shore.”

February 20th.—That old saint, Henry Jackson, died full of love, being ninety-nine years and five months old. Let me die his death !

August 12th.—Our Conference began at Leeds. We enjoyed a solemn sense of the presence of God. We met and parted in love. I then rode to Newcastle, and spent a few months in that Circuit. My disorder continued ; but I could say, “When I am weak, then I am strong.”

In July, 1767, I set out for London. God was with me, and gave me a will and power to preach His word. August 18th our Conference began. Dear Mr. Whitefield and honest Howell Harris attended. All was love, all was harmony. It was a Pentecost indeed !

In the beginning of September, 1768, I left Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and set out with my wife for Birstal, in Yorkshire. The Lord brought us to our journey's end in peace. We met with a hearty welcome ; our friends rejoiced with us, and we praised God together.

On Tuesday, August 1st, 1769, our Conference

began at Leeds. The Spirit of God rested upon us, and made us of one mind and judgment.

In the latter end of July, 1770, I rode to London. Our Conference began August the 7th. The Lord presided over us, and made it a time of love. I then set out for Birstal, where I had laboured two years with great satisfaction, and I hope with some success.

August 26th.—I took my leave of my dear Birstal friends, and rode with my wife to Bradford, in Yorkshire. We met with a loving reception. I laboured this year with much comfort. I hope good was done.

In the year 1771 the Calvinists proclaimed open war against the Remonstrants. In August several of them met at our Conference in Bristol: but their strength failed; they could do nothing; for truth is great, and will prevail.

The two following years I laboured in Newcastle Circuit, among my dear friends and countrymen, whom I love for the truth's sake. Great things hath the Lord done in that part of His vineyard.

In the year 1774 I was appointed at the Bristol Conference for Liverpool Circuit. I took my leave of my dear Newcastle friends with much reluctance, and set out with my wife for Lancashire. September 26th we reached Bolton-in-the-Moors, where we met with a friendly reception. We lodged with honest George Eskrick. The presence of the Lord dwelt with us, and we enjoyed great peace.

In the year 1775 I removed to Liverpool, where I spent a few months with pleasure and profit. I found much love both to the place and people: they bore with my bodily weakness, and refreshed me in the Lord.

In July, 1776, I left Bolton, and set out for London. Our Conference began the first Tuesday in August. The shout of a King was in the midst of us, and we praised God together for all that He had done. I spent a few days in that great city ; preached the word, visited a few dear Christian friends, and then set out for Manchester.

November 7th.—I set out once more for Ireland. The 8th I reached Conway ; the 9th, Holyhead ; the 10th I embarked, and, after a dangerous passage, landed that evening in Dublin. I preached every evening at Wood-street to a large auditory. God blessed His word, and gave me success. I visited a few poor backsliders, who were glad to see the face of an old friend. May God restore them for Christ's sake ! Monday, the 24th, I embarked for England.—25th, landed at the Head, and took the stage to Conway.—26th, I came to Chester, and the 28th to Manchester ; where my wife and friends received me with great joy. We praised God for trials and blessings.

In the latter end of July, 1777, I set out for Bristol. I visited the principal societies in my way, and God gave me strength of body and peace of mind. Our Conference began the first Tuesday in August. We had a good season : love to God and man crowned our meeting. I then rode to Manchester, and spent a few days with my old friends. I published the word of salvation in Salford, on the Sabbath-day, to a large congregation. Some of our mistaken Churchmen presented the fire-engine ; but their strength failed, they could do nothing. This vain attempt seemed to be the last effort of a conquered enemy. I then set out for Bradford in Yorkshire, where I spent an agreeable year with Mr.

Benson and my dear friends. I hope our weak labours were made a blessing to many.

In the year 1778 our Conference began at Leeds, the first Tuesday in August. I was stationed another year, with Mr. Murlin and Johnson, in Bradford Circuit. We laboured together in love ; God was with us, and gave us success.

In the year 1779 I was appointed, at our London Conference, for Colne Circuit, in Lancashire.

August 25th.—I took my leave of our dear friends at Bradford, and set out with my wife for Colne. I met with many agreeable and some disagreeable things. The grand enemy had wounded many, who, I hope, are now healed again. We had a severe winter, many crosses and trials, and many blessings. The Lord owned our weak labours, and gave us a little success. The last time I visited the classes in this Circuit, we added thirty-eight to our number, and twenty-three to the church of the living God, who had found remission of sins through the blood of our adorable Saviour. Nine died in peace, and are now with the spirits of just men made perfect in the paradise of God.

I can say but little about the controversy between the Calvinian brethren and the Arminians. I believe Christ tasted death for every man : but I do not love contention ; I am no disputant ; I therefore leave polemical divinity to men of learning, abilities, and experience. I can only say, I have been greatly humbled for my sin. I know in whom I have believed. I know God is love. I know it by experience. He hath loved me, and given His Son for me. I have peace with God, through faith in the blood of Christ. I am at peace with all the saints, with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. I desire

to follow after peace with all men. I hate sin, and by the grace of God I overcome it. I love holiness, the whole mind that was in Christ, and I pursue it. By all means I follow on, if I may apprehend that for which I was also apprehended of Christ Jesus. I aim at, wish, and pray for, all that grace, glory, and immortality promised by the Father, and procured by the Son of His love. This I call Bible religion, genuine Christianity; and this religion I call mine.

This I desire to recommend to all men, by preaching His word in the pulpit, in the house, and in the way; in season and out of season, according to my ability.

Without this religion, all names, notions, and forms, among all sects and parties, are but mere parade and idle show. Without repentance, without faith in the blood of Christ, without holiness of heart and life, without love to God and man, all is nothing. Let all men consider this well, and pray for, and seek after, this one thing needful, that they may be saved from sin in this life, and from hell in the great day of the Lord Jesus!

January 5th, 1780.—I preached at Colne on old Christmas-day, my birth-day. What is time?—“Dream of a dream, and shadow of a shade.”—Lord, help me to embrace the present moment!

23d.—I met with a perfect hurricane at Bacup. I was shut up with mountains of snow with a poor old woman, till the 27th, with little fire and small provisions; but God was with us. The same day I set out with James Dawson and John Earnshaw, over the hills, to Colne, well in body, and in perfect peace of mind.

April 2d.—I rode from Preston to Bolton, to meet

Mr. Wesley. We had a good season ; the Lord was with us of a truth, and great was our joy.

July 16th.—I set out for Bristol, visited the societies in my way, preached the word, and was refreshed. Praise the Lord !

Our Conference began on Tuesday, August 1st, and concluded on the 9th. Our brethren made me president in Mr. Wesley's absence. A poor helpless worm ! Superintendent ! President !—Great words ! I doubt we have not grace to bear them. I visited the brethren in my return. I hope good was done : great was my joy.

This year I had my comforts with the cross. I trust some good was done ; I left the Circuit in peace. God was glorified.

August 2d, 1781.—I left Colne, and set out for Leeds, where I was stationed this year with Mr. Mather and Mr. Benson. I am not without fear. God give us success !

October 3d.—I set out for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and met my dear friends with joy. This journey I trust was a blessing to many, and to my own soul.

January 1st, 1782.—We renewed our covenant, and God confirmed it ; His power was present to heal. I preached on Isaiah iv. 3. The Lord Jehovah was with us, therefore we did rejoice.

Our Conference was at London this year. I did not attend. I had a kind invitation to the metropolis, but I preferred a country Circuit.

August 20th.—I left Leeds, and set out for Birstal. I preached before the old house, from Rev. xxi. 6, where I had preached thirty-five years ago, before there was any preaching-house in the place.

Dec. 23d.—At Hanging-Heaton I preached sister Wilson's funeral sermon. I preached her husband's

fourteen years before, and his daughter's thirteen months after: they all died in the Lord, and left a good testimony behind them.

July 10th, 1783.—We had thunder and lightning, one tremendous clap after another, from ten o'clock till one in the morning, as if the heavens and earth had been in one flame. Who shall stand in the last great day, when worlds on worlds shall pass away and be no more?

August 26th.—My wife and Nancy set out in the midst of thunder and lightning for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The Lord saved them, and brought them to their journey's end in peace and safety. Praise the Lord! 27th, I followed them, and reached Newcastle the 29th. This year I had many blessings among my old friends and countrymen, in the land of my nativity.

January 1st, 1784.—In the evening we renewed our covenant, and began the new year with great joy and humility. I set out for Rothbury and Alnwick, but was shut up at Saugh-house with a violent storm of snow. All the roads were filled, no post could travel: therefore my wife could have no tidings. But the Lord provided a harbour for me: I had a good house, a loving friend, and everything needful for man and horse. God is good.

24th.—I set out with a friend for Morpeth.

25th.—Came safe and well to Newcastle. My dear wife and friends received me as one alive from the dead. “Praise the Lord, O my soul!”

July 26th.—Our Conference began with some contention. We had war for many days on account of the Deed of Declaration. Alas! for this. Dear Mr. Fletcher, by prayer and his great humility, gained his point at last.

August 2d.—The war ended, and we had peace.  
Praise God and the Lamb for ever!

13th.—I came to Bolton, met with a kind reception, and preached that evening. For some time I met with a cross; but, through faith in the blood of the Lamb, I overcame it.

January 1st, 1785.—We renewed our covenant. This year the work of the Lord prospered, many souls were added to the church, and Satan's kingdom fell. Great was our rejoicing in the Lord.

July 12th.—I set out for London, visited Stockport, Buxton, Derby, &c.

20th.—By the hand of a kind Providence, came to London in good spirits. Bless God! we had great unity and peace.

August 3d.—Our Conference concluded. Mr. Pawson, Mr. Hanby, and J. Taylor, were ordained, and sent to Scotland. This was a new thing. I was the first Methodist preacher that visited North Britain. The Gospel was then well received, and good was done.

5th.—I left London, visited the brethren, preached the word, and, on the 10th, came to Bolton in peace.

January 1st, 1786.—We renewed our covenant, and God renewed our strength. Many were filled with love, peace, and power.

July 12th.—I left Bolton, and set out for Bristol.

21st.—I preached, from Matt. x. 7, before the Conference. My great Master was with me. I found liberty to preach the kingdom. The Conference began on the 25th, and concluded August 9th. I was appointed for Liverpool.

August 2d.—I left Bristol, and on the 9th reached Bolton. I preached the word at several places by the way, and the power of the Lord was present to heal.

14th.—I set out for Liverpool. I had a good time in this Circuit. My friends were very kind ; and the Lord blessed the word, and gave me success.

30th.—Mr. Lee, who succeeded me at Bolton, died in peace, and entered into his rest.

October 3d.—I preached his funeral sermon to a large congregation. It was a solemn time indeed. I knew the man well, and his conversation. I laboured with him in several Circuits in England and Scotland. He was a good preacher, and a pious man. Our Conference began the last Tuesday in July, 1787. We had great peace and unity, and our love abounded to God and all mankind.

August 8th.—I returned to Bolton again. Some few began to think I came too often round, and were not well pleased ; but the Lord owned His poor servant more and more, stopped every mouth, and made many hearts rejoice.

January 5th, 1788.—Old Christmas-day. I entered into the sixty-sixth year of my age. A moment ! a moment !

January 1st, 1790.—I preached from 2 Cor. ix. 15. He is all in heaven and on earth.

Our Conference was this year at Bristol, but I did not attend. I have now preached and travelled over England, Scotland, and Ireland, about forty-seven years ; yet I merit nothing. I am saved through faith in the blood of the Lamb. It now appears to me I shall keep a regular Circuit no longer, but go where my good Lord and Master directs. Lord, give peace and success ! I spent the remaining part of this year in Liverpool, Colne, Burnley, Padiham, Blackburn, and Preston. I hope I may say with humility, good was done ; and I found a blessing as a present reward.

The Rev. Mr. John Wesley died March 2d, 1791, aged eighty-eight. This great man is now gone to receive his reward, and his works will follow him. Though he be dead, he yet speaketh. He was a singular character.

March 30th.—I preached his funeral sermon on John xix. 30 : “It is finished.” When I began to sing, a remarkable incident happened: a plain, simple man heard something crack, and immediately cried out, “The gallery is coming down!” This dreadful cry struck the whole congregation with a panic; all was in confusion. The people came down stairs one over another. Some came over the gallery, others through the windows; but the commotion was soon over, all was still as night, and I began and finished my sermon with quietness. It was a good season; there were many melting hearts.

This year I visited our friends in Yorkshire; and I have reason to believe the Lord was with me, and good was done. Our Conference began at Manchester, July 27th, and ended August 8th. Above two hundred preachers attended. Our new mode of government was settled with great unanimity. For such a body of men to agree in one, we must say, “is the Lord’s doing, and marvellous in our eyes.”

January 1st, 1792.—February, March, and April, I laboured at and near Bolton; the rest of the year I made little excursions to the neighbouring Circuits. I met with some trials, but many comforts. I found tranquillity. The good word was blessed, the churches edified, and God our Saviour glorified.

January 1st, 1793.—In the spring, I left Bolton, and visited Yorkshire and other places. The hand of the Lord was with me, and His power was made

manifest. Sinners were apprized of their danger, and saints built up in their most holy faith.

January 1st, 1794.—I can now do but little. I grow feeble; but the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my portion. Thou art my all: my theme, my inspiration, and my crown! Keep me and save me to the end! Amen.

January 1st, 1795.—I am spared, and able to do a little. I have still one mite to cast into His treasury. He has made me a wonder to myself. I have now been about fifty-two years in my good Lord's service: He has kept me by His mighty power, and I trust in His infinite mercy He will keep me to the end. I have seen wonders night and day, by land and sea. Jesus is my foundation, way, and end. I have now entered into the seventy-third year of my age. O, what a dwarf! I know little; I have done little; I have suffered little. Lord, forgive my sins, my virtues too, through blood Divine!

January 1st, 1796.—Through infinite mercy, I am still spared to do a little for my dear Lord and Master. I visited Yorkshire this year, and made many other excursions. I saw the unerring hand of a kind Providence in all my ways.

January 1st, 1797.—Through mercy, I am still preaching. My soul thirsts for the prosperity of Sion. O, may our God hasten the accomplishment of His great and precious promises, and the glory of the latter days!

July 27th.—I attended our Conference at Leeds; and, at the desire of my brethren, preached. I hope the word did not fall to the ground. This year has been a year of many mercies.

January 1st, 1798.—My God is good; my God is love; my God is all, and all things to me,—to me, a

worm, nothing, vile, and base. I am lost in wonder, love, and praise !

January 1st, 1799.—We began this year with the sound of the jubilee trumpet. We had a good season ; the word did run, and was glorified.

July 28th.—I attended the Conference at Manchester ; preached, and rejoiced to see my brethren : it was a time of love. I then set out for Liverpool ; preached in all the chapels to large congregations ; and I have reason to believe God did own His own word.

January 1st, 1800.—We began this year with prayer and praise. February, March, April, and May, preached at and about Bolton. In August I visited Liverpool ; preached in all their chapels to large auditories. My Lord and Master gave me a blessing, a present reward ; and I returned to Bolton in peace.

January 1st, 1801.—We ended the old year with prayer, and began the new year with praises.

29th.—I preached on Psalm cxix. 77 : “ Let Thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live.” I am dead : let Thy mercy come unto me ; show me favour, and I shall live,—live to Thy glory here, and live with Thee in glory for ever. Amen.

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THE following particulars respecting the close of Mr. Hopper’s life are collected from Mrs. Hopper, from his niece, and his faithful friend, Mr. George Eskrick :—

ABOUT sixteen years ago, Mr. Hopper having built a house adjoining the chapel at Bolton-le-moors,

from that time his wife and family resided there; while he continued his itinerant labours in the neighbouring Circuits till the Conference of 1790; when, finding the infirmities of old age increasing, and being no longer capable of doing the work of an evangelist, he desisted, and from that period his labours were principally confined to Bolton; though he generally paid an annual visit to his friends in Yorkshire, and the adjacent Circuits.

Thus he continued to spend the remainder of his strength in that blessed work in which he had given indubitable proof that his whole heart had been for many years engaged.

He preached frequently in Bolton, and his discourses generally afforded instruction and profit; and they were often accompanied with a Divine influence to the hearers.

He preached his last sermon about a week before his confinement, from John xvi. 33: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." It was attended with a peculiar blessing to many; and he delivered it with an uncommon degree of energy.

In the beginning of December, 1801, while cutting a loaf of bread, his arm suddenly fell, and it was supposed that he had dislocated his shoulder. His pain was very great; and from that time he was confined to the house. He had also another complaint of a very painful nature, supposed to have been the effects of his incessant labours and sufferings in the early part of his life. This, in conjunction with the violent pain in his arm and shoulder, caused him to consume away like a garment fretted by the moth; and he was, for some weeks before his death, reduced almost to a skeleton. In the beginning of February

he was confined to his room, and soon after to his bed. He bore his afflictions with invincible patience and Christian fortitude. Sometimes he exclaimed, "Lord Jesus, pity a poor sufferer;" but would instantly say, "It is all right; it is all right; it will soon be over; His will be done." The enemy was never permitted in the least to disturb him. His old, faithful friend, George Eskrick, sat up with him every other night, and sometimes two nights together, and was a witness of his holy resignation to the will of his heavenly Father.

"On Thursday, February 25th," says Mr. Atmore, "I went to Bolton, to see Mr. Hopper. When I entered the room, he was in a doze; but as soon as he awoke, he gave me his hand, and, with great affection, said, 'O, my dear friend, how glad I am to see you! Providence has sent you. You and I have often met; and this will be our last meeting on earth. But we shall meet in our Father's house above.' He then desired his niece to bring his own drawer. He took from thence several papers; and, after looking at them for some time, he said, 'I commit these papers to you: here is an account of my poor, insignificant life and labours, and a sermon I preached on the only foundation God has laid in Zion for poor sinners to build their hopes of salvation upon. On this foundation all my hopes are founded now; and it does support me! I have not a doubt,—no, not the shadow of a doubt; and as for the enemy, I know not what is become of him. I have neither seen him, nor heard of him, for some time. I think he has quitted the field.' He then put the papers into my hand, and said, 'If you think they will be of any use to the church and the world, take them, make them your own; revise, make what alterations

you please, and send them forth in the name of the Lord.'"

The last day or two he lay quite composed; he spoke very little, but was frequently engaged in earnest, fervent prayer, often saying, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." On Friday evening, March 5th, 1802, he entered into his Master's joy, in the eightieth year of his age.

He had given particular directions concerning his funeral; and, agreeably to his request, his remains were deposited in a new vault, on a spot of ground he himself had pointed out when in perfect health, in the new churchyard in Bolton. His funeral was attended by a great multitude of his friends, and the inhabitants of the town and its vicinity; and his body was committed to the earth "in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," having been a steady follower of Christ for upwards of fifty-nine years, and a faithful preacher of the Gospel for about fifty-seven.

He was a plain man, of good understanding, of some learning, and of a sound judgment,—a scribe well-instructed in the things of the kingdom,—a workman who needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. His talents for the ministry were very considerable; but he was altogether an original, and his matter and method were peculiar to himself. He was a Boanerges, a "son of thunder," to the careless sinner, whom he frequently made to tremble, while he forcibly preached the "terrors of the Lord," and "warned him to flee from the wrath to come." And he knew well how to speak a word in season "to them that were weary:" he was a "son of consolation" to the "mourners in

Sion," to whom he proclaimed the Saviour of the world, as the only foundation of their hope and confidence, for pardon, holiness, and heaven. To humble, faithful believers, he preached the Lord that bought them, as made of God unto them "wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption;" at the same time he "affirmed constantly, that they who had believed in God should be careful to maintain good works." Thus did this man of God, for upwards of half a century, "warn every man, and teach every man in all wisdom, that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Few public men have preserved a more unblemished character, conducted themselves with greater propriety, or been more justly or generally beloved and respected.

His labours for a series of years were very extensive and successful. He formed some of the first societies in the north of England, visited Ireland several times, was the first Methodist preacher who went into North Britain; and travelled through a great number of the Circuits in this kingdom, with honour to himself and profit to the people. He now rests from his labours, and his works will follow him.

A sermon on the occasion of Mr. Hopper's death was preached by the Rev. Thomas Cooper, from 2 Sam. iii. 38: "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?" It was published in the Methodist Magazine for September, 1803. The preacher says, respecting Mr. Hopper, "He was a great man naturally, being superior to most others in the extent of his mental powers; in respect to which the difference is so great among men, that, while some, with all the means of improvement

at their command, are incapable of attaining any respectable distinction, others, without such advantages, find their way, in defiance of the most formidable impediments, to eminence in the world. To the truth of this remark, Mr. Hopper afforded no small testimony, having risen from an humble situation in life to a high degree of celebrity as a public speaker.

" He was a person of an exceedingly quick apprehension, and of so clear an understanding as not easily to be imposed upon. Though the warmth and fertility of his imagination were obviously great, he never suffered himself to be hurried by it into any ridiculous extravagancies ; but so governed it by a sound judgment, as to make it subservient to the grand design of his ministry. To these he added a strong memory ; which, as it faithfully retained what was committed to its charge, so it greatly contributed to his stock of useful knowledge, and of course to those abilities which made him so acceptable to his numerous hearers. Of those abilities, however, he appeared to have no flattering opinion himself, as he seldom spoke in reference to them but in terms of great humility ; yet they, together with his genuine piety, were so well known to, and appreciated by, his discerning friends, as to procure him that deference in all places which is rarely paid but to real worth.

" Had he been intended for any of those professions which are most esteemed among men, there is every reason to believe that he would have excelled in them ; as the God of nature had furnished him with all the talents necessary to form the great man, in whatever sphere he might have been called to move. But it was happy for himself, as well as for

thousands of his fellow-creatures, that those talents were consecrated to the service of the temple, and employed against the strongholds of sin, in casting down the proud imaginations of the carnal mind, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God.

“ His duty as a minister requiring him to be furnished unto every good word and work, to speak as the oracles of God, and to declare His whole counsel to the church, he wisely directed his first studies to the holy Scriptures. These he thoroughly examined, and most clearly discovered in them that infallible authority with which they are supported, those Divine evidences with which they abound, and the wonderful connexion and harmony which run through the whole. From this source of wisdom and truth he supplied himself with the weapons of his defence against opposing errors; with the standard of his religious experience, with the rule of his life, and with his motives of encouragement and support in the kingdom and patience of Jesus: not from the ethics of pagan philosophers, or the pompous Councils of the Christian priesthood, but from this inestimable source, it was that he provided himself with all the means of feeding the flock of Christ, and of giving to every one his portion of meat in due season.

“ That the people might sustain no loss through any avoidable deficiency in him, he laboured diligently to make himself master of those rules which would best enable him to convey instruction to their minds in the most easy and convincing manner. In most of his public discourses the well-informed hearer would at once perceive the man of genius and of science, as well by their disposition and arrangement, as by the judicious selection of meta-

phorical illustrations with which they were adorned ; so that he was justly esteemed a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

“ He was not entirely unacquainted with what are called the learned languages. As he considered the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be of the utmost importance, both to himself and to mankind at large ; and believing it impossible for them to be translated into foreign languages without depriving them of many of their native beauties, he regarded it a duty which he owed to himself, to God, and the church, to acquire some knowledge of those languages in which the Scriptures were originally written.

“ At that time of his life when the vivacity of youth, and the vigour of a good constitution, served, in some measure, to supply the want of better knowledge, he foresaw that he might survive a period when those resources would totally fail ; and this stimulated him to such a course of application as enabled him fully to keep pace with the increasing light of his hearers, and to maintain his eminence in the ministry, with little abatement, to the close of his protracted pilgrimage.

“ Though experience shows the difficulty of indulging a thirst for natural and spiritual instructions at the same time, yet we have examples in proof of the possibility of doing so ; and we may confidently affirm Mr. Hopper to have been one, if the account which he has published of himself is entitled to our credit, which no one who had the happiness of knowing him will ever be tempted to call in question. While he sought the ornament of a cultivated understanding, he neglected not the ornament

of a meek and quiet spirit; always remembering that, ‘whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.’

“ He was equally great in respect to the success which attended the employment of his abilities in the cause of truth. His first success was among his own relations, many of whom very soon became witnesses of the truth he taught; and the success with which he began increased in proportion as he extended his labours. Being a good man, full of faith, and mighty in the Scriptures, God greatly blessed his word both to saints and sinners, graciously banished all his fears, and made him as bold as a lion in the face of all his dangers.

“ It often happened, while he was delivering his message to tumultuous assemblies, with an energy which strongly marked the interest which he himself had in it, that giddy triflers, impious despisers, ring-leaders of mobs, and the most abandoned reprobates, have wondered, trembled, given signs, as convincing as they were sudden, of the deepest compunction and sorrow of heart; the bitter wailings of the penitent prisoners have been turned into songs of deliverance; and the whole assembly has been awfully affected with a sense of the majesty and presence of God. And that Divine unction which rendered his word efficacious during the earlier years of his ministry continued to attend him, both in his public and more private exercises, to the end of his life.”

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THE following letter was written, I believe, to the late Rev. George Whitefield. It contains a particular account of the dying experience of the late Mrs. Hopper:—

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, *August 28th, 1755.*

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

So true is the maxim of St. Augustine, “It is impossible to lose anything without sorrow, but what we possess without passion.” We believe there are few persons free from an infinite number of these engagements, though, indeed, we may be ignorant of them, till an actual separation discovers what they are; and when the precious soul is separated from them, it has then a sense of the privation proportionable to its union with them. All transitory things are but shadows, and the most beautiful flowers soon fade away. We commonly say, “Afflictions are blessings in disguise;” and may we not presume to say, with the same propriety, that “human comforts are afflictions in disguise,” more especially if they engross any part of the heart which belongs to our heavenly Father? Therefore we ought to enjoy all things in God, and for His glory, who is the centre of all perfection, the fountain of all true happiness, and the one chief good.

Must I now exhibit a Christian tragedy? I will, then, tell you, my dear friend, I have been very happy for ten years, three months, and six days, with an agreeable companion, a constant friend, and a most dear, loving, affectionate wife. But now, alas! alas! I look back, and, behold, it is a dream.

Friday, the 15th of August, 1755, my dear and most loving wife took a violent nervous fever, at the

Hagg, in Derwent-water, the place of her nativity; and on the 25th died in perfect peace, in the glorious arms of her dear Redeemer. On the 27th, her funeral sermon was preached at the same place, to a large auditory, who came from every quarter; and that evening she was interred in Ryton church, amongst the dry bones of her dear ancestors, where her body shall sweetly rest till the morning of the general resurrection.

But perhaps it may be more agreeable to you still, if I give you a more particular account of God's gracious dealings with her in her sickness, more especially in the solemn article of death. In the beginning of her illness, Satan endeavoured, by his infernal insinuations, to make her give up her shield, and cast away her confidence, by suggesting, " You are built upon the sand, you have laid a wrong foundation; all you have to trust in, after twelve years' progress in the Christian religion, are only false imaginations, a feigned castle in the air, or a mere chimera in your head; therefore you must lie down in sorrow, and be miserably disappointed in the end."

When this violent storm came upon her so near the haven, she immediately fled to the throne of grace, the rock of Israel; for it was now high time to cast anchor on that sure bottom, to examine her faith, and the ground of her eternal hopes. She therefore entreated the almighty God of Jacob to discover her real state, that she might see and know whether her condition was so melancholy in reality, or whether it was only a flood of temptations, or the voice of the enemy. She had no sooner supplicated the Friend of sinners, but the cloud broke, and the glorious sun of righteousness began to shine, the old

subtle tempter fled, and God filled her with joy and peace in believing.

After she had spoken a few words to me concerning some temporal affairs, she gave up this world, her dear friends and relations, and the dearest part of herself, cheerfully. She patiently endured all her afflictions, and drank the bitter cup without complaining ; nay, not so much as desiring the least abatement of her pain, or mitigation of her trouble. Her only request was for patience and resignation to bear and suffer all her heavenly Father's will. She expressed her firm trust and confidence in the Lord several times, without fear or doubt, as her wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, as long as she could speak ; and after that useful organ was silent, she manifested her inward joy, and the peace she felt, by her patience and heavenly looks. During this time I prayed with her twice ; and was enabled in confidence to commit her body to the earth from whence it came, and her precious soul to the dear Redeemer who bought it with His most precious blood. Near the time of her happy departure, I took her in my arms, and said, "Farewell ! farewell ! farewell ! my dear wife, and most loving companion! The Lord receive thy spirit !" When death, that long-desired and long-expected friend, was executing his last office, and drawing the last pin of the poor earthly tabernacle, she looked up, and gave me a parting smile, and then calmly and sweetly fell asleep in the arms of Christ, without a struggle, sigh, or groan.

Now, my dear friend, what shall I say ? I soon shall close my weary eyes in peace, and stretch composed upon my dusty bed. O death ! thy quiet and refreshing shade shall yield a long, an unmolested

rest from all our fruitless toil and vanity below the sun. May we love the dear Redeemer ! and may we live in Him, and die in Him ! is the sincere prayer of your affectionate brother and afflicted friend,

C. H.

MR. WHITEFIELD'S ANSWER.

MANCHESTER, *August 29th, 1755.*

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

THIS day, at noon, I heard and felt your mournful, joyful account of the triumphant departure of your dear, dear yoke-fellow. Surely, thought I, affliction makes one eloquent. Surely, thought I, I love and sympathize with the dear afflicted writer from the very bottom of my heart. This hath constrained me to pray for you ; and, being just come from my God, the same love constrains me to write you these few lines. Courage, my dear man ! courage ! Wish her not down. Yonder she is, encircled in the arms of our Jesus ! We shall go to her, but she will not return to us. O for patience to wait ! I am sick of this world, I am sick of time, I am sick of all poor transitory things. I long, I long to be in a happy eternity. O that we may be found doing our Master's will, and humbly waiting at His bleeding feet ! Indeed I feel, I feel I love you, and could now freely weep over you. O to sit loose to all created objects ! Alas ! alas ! how soon may our Isaacs be called for, and our beloved friends cut off with a stroke ! What should we do, had we not an unchangeable Jesus to go to ? Into His dear and everlasting arms I most humbly commit you. My heart is full : I could write much, but am called away. Adieu ; the Lord be with you and yours, and

all! We have had golden seasons abroad, and sweet invitations at home. Help me to cry, "Grace! grace!" and accept of this as a token of unfeigned sympathizing love, from yours most affectionately in our common Lord,

G. W.

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LETTER FROM THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, ON THE  
SAME SUBJECT.

ST. IVES, *September 12th, 1755.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

THE Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and wise are all His ways. The great point is to understand the design of His gracious wisdom, and to answer and fulfil that design. One thing is certain: He calls you to a more full and absolute dedication of your soul and body to Him. He calls you to converse with Him more in prayer and meditation. In the former we more directly speak to God; in the latter, He speaks to us. And every possible loss is gain, if it produces this blessed effect.

Consider yourself as now more than ever married to Christ and His dear people: then, even for this kindly-severe dispensation, you should praise Him for ever.

I am your affectionate friend and brother,

J. W.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

BRISTOL, *October 8th, 1755.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

THERE is something of an openness and frankness

in your temper which I love; but that very saine temper will sometimes expose you to inconveniences, unless you always have an eye to God, that He may give you steadiness and resolution. O, keep your heart with all diligence, and do not take one step without first consulting your best friends. You have one business on earth,—to save souls. Give yourself wholly to this. Fulfil the work of a preacher, and of an assistant, as you never did before. Be another Thomas Walsh. Pursue the whole of scriptural Christianity. Stand upon the edge of this world, ready to take wing; having your feet on earth, your eyes and heart in heaven.

I am your affectionate friend and brother,

J. W.

THE LIFE  
OF  
MR. THOMAS MITCHELL.

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WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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1. I WAS born in the parish of Bingley, Yorkshire, December 3d, 1726. My parents both died in the faith. I lived with them seven years, and seven years more with an uncle who was in the same parish. When I was turned four years old, my mother went one day to market, and left me to take care of the house, and two younger children. She had not been gone long before I set the bed on fire. A neighbour, seeing the smoke, and thinking the house was on fire, came with all speed to our assistance. In a short time she, with some others, extinguished the fire. Had it not been for this providential assistance, we might all have been burned to death; for we had not sense to get out of the way. From five years old I had strong convictions at times, and put up many prayers for mercy. And though I had no one to teach me, yet I had the fear of God in my heart. If I was overtaken in any sin, I was much troubled, till I had said my prayers, which I thought would make all up.

2. At fourteen, I was bound apprentice to a mason. While I lived with my master, I had little concern for my soul. But a few years after, at the time of the Rebellion, I enlisted among the Yorkshire Blues. I continued with them about a year. There was one man among us who had the fear of God before his eyes. He gave me good advice, which one time in particular took great effect upon me and my comrade. We both of us were under deep convictions, but knew not what to do to be saved. I began to fear death exceedingly, knowing I was not fit to die. These words followed me continually : “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.” I thought I must fulfil it ; but I thought I grew worse and worse, till my load was many times heavier than I could bear.

3. In the year 1746, the Rebellion being over, we were discharged. I then sought for a people that feared God, and soon joined the Methodists. I heard John Nelson several times, and began to have some hope of finding mercy. Some time after I went to hear Mr. Grimshaw, and was convinced that we are to be saved by faith ; yea, that the very worst of sinners might be saved by faith in Jesus Christ. Soon after, I heard Mr. Charles Wesley preach from these words, “I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” He showed clearly, that Christ is able and willing to save the greatest sinners. I was much refreshed under the sermon, and much more so in singing these words :—

“ Whither should a sinner go ?  
His wounds for me stand open wide :  
Only Jesus will I know,  
And Jesus crucified.”

4. But when he told us, we might know our sins forgiven in this life, yea, this very moment, it seemed to me new doctrine, and I could not believe it at all. But I continued in prayer ; and in a few days I was convinced of it, to my great joy. The love of Christ broke into my soul, and drove away all guilt and fear ; and at the same time He filled my heart with love both to God and man. I saw that God was my salvation, and could trust Him, and praise Him with joyful lips. I could sing with all my heart,

“O what shall I do, my Saviour to praise ?  
So faithful and true, so plenteous in grace ;  
So strong to deliver, so good to redeem,  
The weakest believer that hangs upon Him !”

5. Soon after this, Mr. John Wesley came to Bradford, and preached on, “This one thing I do.” He joined several of us together in a class, which met about a mile from the town. But all of them fell back, and left me alone ; yet afterward some of them returned. Before this, I thought my hill was so strong, that I could never be moved. But, seeing so many fall into sin, I began to feel an evil heart of unbelief ; and was fully convinced, that there must be a farther change in my heart, before I could be established in grace. Afterward I removed to Keighley, and had many opportunities of hearing and profiting by Mr. Grimshaw. But, feeling my corruptions, with strong temptations, I fell into great doubtings. I was almost in despair. I could scarce pray at all, and was tempted to murder myself. One day, as I was going to hear Mr. Grimshaw, and going over a bridge, I was strongly tempted to leap into the river ; but the Lord had mercy upon me, and delivered me from this temptation. Yet still I had many fears. I was in this

state near half a year, finding no comfort in anything. But one evening, one of our friends prayed in the society, and my soul was set at liberty. All my doubts fled away, and faith and love once more sprung up in my heart. I afterwards saw that God had a farther end in these trials and deliverances.

6. Not long after this, I felt a great desire to tell others what God had done for my soul. I wanted my fellow-creatures to turn to the Lord, but saw myself utterly unfit to speak for Him. I saw the neighbourhood in which I lived abounding with all manner of wickedness, and no man caring for their souls, or warning them to flee from the wrath to come. I began to reprove sin wherever I was, though many hated me for so doing. I did not regard that; for God gave me an invincible courage. But still I did not see clearly, whether I was called to speak in public or no. After many reasonings in my mind, I ventured to give notice of a meeting. When the time came, my soul was bowed down within me; my bones shaked, and one knee smote against the other. I had many to hear me: some of them heard with pain, as my gifts were very small, and advised me to speak no more in public. But one young woman was convinced of her lost condition, and never rested till she found redemption.

7. But this did not satisfy my friends. So, as they were not willing to receive me, I went to those that would; and God began to bless my weak endeavours. Yet I was not satisfied myself. For several weeks I had great trouble in my mind. I thought no man's case was like mine. Sometimes I wished I had never been born. Most of my friends were against me. I was full of fears within, and

had a persecuting world without. But all this time my heart was drawn out in prayer, that God would show me the way wherein I should go. Being now employed at Sir Walter Coverley's, in the parish of Guiseley, I met with a few serious people at Yeadon. They were just setting out in the ways of God, and desired me to give a word of exhortation among them. I did so a few times, and God was pleased to bless it to their souls. The little society increased, and they all dearly loved one another. But Satan was not idle. Every time we met, a riotous mob gathered round the house, and disturbed us much.

8. One evening, while William Darney was preaching, the curate of Guiseley came at the head of a large mob, who threw eggs in his face, pulled him down, dragged him out of the house on the ground, and stamped upon him. The curate himself then thought it was enough, and bade them let him alone, and go their way. Some time after Jonathan Maskew came. As soon as he began to speak, the same mob came, pulled him down, and dragged him out of the house. They then tore off his clothes, and dragged him along upon his naked back over the gravel and pavement. When they thought they had sufficiently bruised him, they let him go, and went away. With much difficulty he crept to a friend's house, where they dressed his wounds, and got him some clothes. It was my turn to go next. No sooner was I at the town, than the mob came, like so many roaring lions. My friends advised me not to preach that night; and undertook to carry me out of the town. But the mob followed me in a great rage, and stoned me for near two miles, so that it was several weeks before I got well of the bruises I then received.

9. About this time a carpenter was swearing horribly, whom I calmly reproved. He immediately flew in a violent passion, and having an axe in his hand, lifted it up, and swore he would cleave my head in a moment. But just as he was going to strike, a man that stood by snatched hold of his arm, and held him till his passion cooled. At first I felt a little fear, but it soon vanished away.

10. While I was working at Sir Walter's, some one informed him that I was a Methodist. He was much displeased, saying, "I like him for a workman; but I hate his religion." This was chiefly owing to his steward, whom I had often reproved for swearing. He mortally hated me on that account. But in a little time he was taken ill. Perceiving himself worse, he sent a message to me, earnestly desiring I would come and pray with him. I went, and found him in an agony of conviction, crying aloud for mercy. I showed him where mercy was to be found, and then went to prayer with him. While I was praying, his heart seemed broken, and he was bathed in tears. He owned he had been a grievous sinner; but he cried to God with his latest breath, and I believe not in vain.

11. I stayed some time after in these parts, and was fully employed. All the day I wrought diligently at my business; in the evenings I called sinners to repentance. And now the mobs were not so furious, so that we had no considerable interruption. In the mean time I waited to see whether the Lord had anything for me to do. I made it matter of continual prayer, that He would make my way plain before me. And in a little while I had much more of the best work upon my hands. I was desired to give an exhortation at a village called

Hartwith. I went thither several times. Several here were deeply convinced of sin ; and two or three soon found redemption in the blood of Jesus, the forgiveness of sins. Afterwards I was invited to Thirsk. Here I found a few hungry souls. But they were as sheep without a shepherd, seldom hearing anything like the Gospel. I spent two nights among them. The serious people were much refreshed ; some were awakened and saw their danger, and cried out for mercy.

12. After this I went to Stockton, where I found a lively people, who had been in society for some time. I preached several times among them with great liberty of soul, and freedom of speech ; and, to all appearance, the word had much effect on the hearers. Here I met with Mr. Larwood, who behaved very kindly to me, and told me he hoped I should be very useful if I kept humble. He then sent me before him to York and Leeds, where I preached, and gave notice of his coming. From Leeds I went to Birstal. It happened to be their preaching-night. John Nelson was sick in bed ; so the people desired me to preach, or give them a word of exhortation. Accordingly I preached in the best manner I could ; and the people seemed well satisfied. The next day I went to High-town, and preached to a large congregation in the evening. I had much liberty in speaking, and found a great blessing to my own soul ; and I have reason to believe that the people were well satisfied.

13. From Birstal I went to Heptonstal. Here I met with a lively people, who received me very kindly. I gave several exhortations among them, and the word went with power to many hearts. Among others, a very tall man, who was a butcher,

was cut to the heart. But it had a very bad effect upon him for the present. For he went home and beat his wife in a most terrible manner, because he thought she had told me of all his sinful ways. But afterwards he was convinced and converted. I continued some time in these parts, and went to several places in Lancashire. Here also I found many were awokened, and several found peace with God, while I was among them. I endeavoured to form a regular Circuit in these parts, and in a little time gained my point.

14. I continued here some time, and have reason to hope that I was useful among them. In one place I met with a mob of women, who put me into a pond of water, which took me nearly over my head. But, by the blessing of God, I got out safe, and walked about three miles in my wet clothes; but I catched no cold. I continued some time in these parts, encouraged by the example and advice of good Mr. Grimshaw.

15. One time Paul Greenwood and I called at his house together, and he gave us a very warm exhortation, which I shall not soon forget. He said, "If you are sent of God to preach the Gospel, all hell will be up in arms against you. Prepare for the battle, and stand fast in the good ways of God. Indeed, you must not expect to gain much of this world's goods by preaching the Gospel. What you get must come through the devil's teeth; and he will hold it as fast as he can. I count every covetous man to be one of the devil's teeth. And he will let nothing go, for God and His cause, but what is forced from him."

16. In the year 1751 I was stationed in Lincolnshire. I found a serious people and an open door;

but there were many adversaries. This was far the most trying year which I had ever known. But in every temptation God made a way to escape, that I might be able to bear it.

On Sunday, August 7th, I came to Wrangle, very early in the morning. I preached, as usual, at five. About six, two constables came, at the head of a large mob. They violently broke in upon the people, seized upon me, pulled me down, and took me to a public-house, where they kept me till four in the afternoon. Then one of the constables seemed to relent, and said, "I will go to the minister, and inquire of him whether we may not now let the poor man go." When he came back, he said, "They were not to let him go yet." So he took me out to the mob, who presently hurried me away, and threw me into a pool of standing water. It took me up to the neck. Several times I strove to get out, but they pitched me in again. They told me I must go through it seven times. I did so, and then they let me come out. When I had got upon dry ground, a man stood ready with a pot full of white paint. He painted me all over from head to foot; and then they carried me into a public-house again. Here I was kept, till they had put five more of our friends into the water. Then they came and took me out again, and carried me to a great pond, which was railed in on every side, being ten or twelve feet deep. Here, four men took me by my legs and arms, and swung me backward and forward. For a moment I felt the flesh shrink; but it was quickly gone. I gave myself up to the Lord, and was content His will should be done. They swung me two or three times, and then threw me as far as they could into the water. The fall and the

water soon took away my senses, so that I felt nothing more. But some of them were not willing to have me drowned. So they watched till I came above water, and then, catching hold of my clothes with a long pole, made shift to drag me out.

17. I lay senseless for some time. When I came to myself, I saw only two men standing by me. One of them helped me up, and desired me to go with him. He brought me to a little house, where they quickly put me to bed. But I had not lain long, before the mob came again, pulled me out of bed, carried me into the street, and swore they would take away one of my limbs, if I would not promise to come there no more. I told them, "I can promise no such thing." But the man that had hold of me promised for me, and took me back into the house, and put me to bed again.

Some of the mob then went to the minister again, to know what they must do with me. He told them, "You must take him out of the parish." So they came and took me out of bed a second time. But I had no clothes to put on; my own being wet, and also covered with paint. But they put an old coat about me, took me about a mile, and set me upon a little hill. They then shouted three times, "God save the king, and the devil take the preacher!"

18. Here they left me penniless and friendless: for no one durst come near me. And my strength was nearly gone; so that I had much ado to walk, or even to stand. But, from the beginning to the end, my mind was in perfect peace. I found no anger or resentment, but could heartily pray for my persecutors. But I knew not what to do, or where to go. Indeed, one of our friends lived three or four

miles off. But I was so weak and ill, that it did not seem possible for me to get so far. However, I trusted in God, and set out; and at length I got to the house. The family did everything for me that was in their power: they got me clothes, and whatever else was needful. I rested four days with them, in which time my strength was tolerably restored. Then I went into the Circuit, where I met with more persecution. As I was preaching in a certain village in the Fen, the mob came into the house, and broke through the congregation, in order to pull me down; but the good woman of the house took me into the parlour, and stood in the door with a great kitchen-poker in her hand, and told the mob, the first man that came near the door, she would knock him down. As she was very big with child, and near the time of her travail, this, with the sight of the great poker, kept them off, so that they could not get at me. However, they stayed some time, and then left the house without doing much harm. After they were gone, I gave an exhortation, went to prayer, and then we went to bed in peace. In the midst of this persecution, many were brought to the saving knowledge of God. And as the sufferings of Christ abounded, so our consolations by Christ abounded also. As to the lions at Wrangle, an appeal to the court of King's Bench made both them and the minister quiet as lambs.

19. Coming in December into Lancashire, I found trials of quite another kind. The poor people were in the utmost confusion, like a flock of frightened sheep. John Bennet, who before loved and revered Mr. Wesley for his work's sake, since he got into his new opinions, hated him cordially, and

laboured to set all the people against him. He told them, in the open congregation, that Mr. Wesley was a pope, and that he preached nothing but Popery. December 30th, I met him at Bolton. I desired him to preach; but he would not. So I got up, and spoke as well as I could, though with a heavy heart. After I had done, he met the society, and said many bitter things of Mr. Wesley. He then spread out his hands, and cried, “Popery! Popery! I will not be in connexion with him any more.” I could not help telling him, “The spirit in which you now speak is not of God. Neither are you fit for the pulpit, while you are of such a spirit.” While I was speaking, a woman that stood by me struck me in the face with all her might. Immediately all the congregation was in an uproar; so I thought it best to retire. Afterward I believed it was my duty to expostulate with him; but it did not avail: it seemed to me that all love was departed from him. His mind was wholly set against Mr. Wesley, and against the whole Methodist doctrine and discipline; and he had infused his own spirit into the people in many places: so that I had hard work among them. But the Lord kept my soul in peace and love. Glory be unto His holy name!

20. In May, 1752, I came to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where, after all the storms I had gone through, I was greatly refreshed among a loving, peaceable people, with whom I laboured with much satisfaction. And it pleased the Lord to prosper my labours in Berwick-upon-Tweed, Gateshead-fell, and many other places, where many sinners were both convinced and converted to God. One time, while I was at Berwick, a poor woman came to the house where I was, with a heavy child on her back. She had come from

Ireland, and was going into Scotland. The woman of the house asked her to come in, and gave her some tea. She seemed to be very poor, and wanted help. But as I had only ninepence, and had thirty miles to ride the next day, I thought I could not spare her anything ; but after she had got the child again on her back, and was setting off, my heart pitied her, so I gave her sixpence out of my little stock, and had threepence left. But I trusted in God's providence, and knew that He would provide for me. After preaching the next morning, a poor soldier put two shillings into my hand. So God rewarded me fourfold. I could not help praising Him for this instance of His goodness to me.

21. On May 8th, 1753, I came with Mr. Wesley from Newcastle to York. On the 12th he preached to a large congregation ; and the next morning, from, "Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." I never saw a congregation so affected. Most of the people were in tears, some for joy, and some from a sense of their sins. He had designed to go on to Lincolnshire. But, through the importunity of the people, he consented to stay a little at York, and desired me to go in his place.

22. From the following Conference, (at which fourteen preachers were present, beside Mr. Wesley and his brother,) I went into Wiltshire, where Mr. Pearce, of Bradford, was as a father to me. While I was in this Circuit, I went to see a young man (Mr. Thomas Olivers) who had given an exhortation at times among the people. I found him working hard for his bread. He seemed to me to have much sense, and to be very sincere. I wrote to Mr. Wesley, and told him that I, and many more, thought

he might be very useful. Mr. Wesley desired he might go with me into Cornwall. So we went together; and I believe the Lord made us a blessing to that people: many were convinced and converted, and my friend grew very much in knowledge, and, I hope, in the fear of the Lord. He has been a very useful man in the church of God, and one who has gone through many trials. The Lord help both him and me to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold of eternal life! Here I formed a firm resolution of cleaving more closely to God than ever I had done before. I longed to be wholly freed from the enemies which I carried in my own bosom. I saw no other could possibly hurt me, if I could but conquer them. I read the Bible and prayed much, and found many blessings from the Lord. And I found, in particular, an entire disengagement from all earthly things. My soul was even as a weaned child. I was willing to be anything or nothing. I had no desire for anything in this world, but to live unto the glory of God. O, how easy does it make everything, when we can give up all for Christ!

23. After I had spent some time in Devonshire and Cornwall, I was sent for up to London. Here I had a fever for some time. When I was pretty well recovered, Mr. Wesley desired me to go down to Norwich. I was not well upon the road; but was abundantly worse when I came thither. But, following the advice of a skilful man, I was in a while restored to health and strength. Here I found much comfort among a poor but a loving people. I was in this Circuit (putting the first and second time together) about four years. But in the latter part of this time, I had many trials from J. Wheatley's people. Mr. Wesley had been prevailed upon to take the Taber-

nacle, and to receive Wheatley's people under his care. Wheatley used to call them "my dear lambs;" but such lion-like lambs did I never see. Discipline they knew nothing of; every one would do what was right in his own eyes. And our doctrine was an abomination to them. Great part of them were grounded in Antinomianism. The very sound of "perfection" they abhorred; they could hardly bear the word "holiness." Nothing was pleasing to them, but "faith, faith;" without a word either of its inward or outward fruits.

24. Between the first and second time of my being at Norwich, I spent some time in Sussex. The first place that I preached at was Rye, where no Methodist had ever preached before. Yet there was no opposition, but they received the word with joy and readiness of mind. And many soon felt the burden of their sins, several of whom quickly found peace with God. Most of these very willingly joined together in a little society; some of whom are lodged in Abraham's bosom; and others still remain walking in the way to Sion.

25. Hence I went to several country places. But they were not all so peaceable as at Rye. At the desire of a serious man, I went to Hawkhurst; he had requested me to preach at his house. About six in the evening I began. But I had not spoken many words, before a numerous mob broke in, pulled me down from the place where I stood, and forced me out of the house. Then they struck up my heels, and dragged me upon my back about half a mile to a public-house called Highgate, where I found many gentlemen, with the minister of the parish. They asked, "By what authority do you preach?" I answered, "By the authority of King George," and

showed them my licence. They spoke a little together, and said, "You may go about your business." But, observing the house was filled with a drunken mob, I said, "Gentlemen, I will not go, unless I have a constable to guard me." They immediately sent for a constable, who guarded me to the house from whence I came. But as it was winter time, and the road very dirty, I was in a poor condition, being a good deal bruised, and all my clothes plastered over with dirt. However, after I had got some dry clothes, and taken a little refreshment, I prayed with the family, and then God gave me quiet and refreshing sleep. When I came to London, I applied to a lawyer, who sent down writs for five of the ringleaders. But they quickly came to an agreement. They readily paid all the charges. And here ended our persecution in Sussex. I found a thankful heart for a good king, good laws, and liberty of conscience. And about this time I had much of the presence of the Lord: He was good to me, both as to my body and soul. I prayed much, and the Lord heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. From Sussex I went to Norwich a second time, and here found a young woman that I thought would make me a good wife. In October, 1760, we were married. I bless the Lord for her: she is one of the most suitable wives for me, that I could have found in all the world.

26. In August, 1778, I was stationed in Staffordshire where I spent two years with much satisfaction. The latter year I had many trials, both outward and inward. The work of the Lord did not seem to go forward among the people in some places; but at others it prospered much, while love and peace prevailed among us, which gave me encouragement. I

found some refreshings in my own soul at times, and I could trust the Lord in every trial. His promises were a means of keeping me from being weary and faint in my mind. And by His blessing I got through all, and saw that every trial works for good. The words of the apostle were of great use to me: “ My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” Lord, help me to see Thy good hand in all my trials, that they may be a means of making me more holy in all manner of conversation !

In July, 1780, I set out for Bristol, and in my way met with several of our brethren, some of whom I had not seen for many years. It rejoiced my heart to find them still in the way of the Lord, after all their trials ; and that they were still desirous to preach the Gospel of Christ. Our journey was attended with much peace and love ; and we rejoiced that the Lord had helped us thus far. At this Conference I was ordered to go to Canterbury ; and on August 20th I got safe there : my wife and children having arrived one day before me. I was very thankful to the Lord for His goodness in bringing them safe to this place. I had not been here long before I found that true religion had lost ground. When I left them, two-and-twenty years ago, they were a loving, lively people. But they fell out by the way, and lost their love one for another. I was much troubled to see them so cold and careless in the cause of God. This, with my own infirmities, brought me into much trouble of mind. But I gave myself up to prayer, and begged of the Lord that He would deliver me from whatever hindered His work in my own soul ;

and that He would do it in His own way. About the middle of October last, He laid His afflicting hand upon me. I had a fever attended with an ague. This continued half a year. I was under the care of an apothecary in Canterbury. He did all he could to remove my disorder, but without effect. From Canterbury I removed to Dover, thinking the change of air would help me; but I still continued as bad as ever. While I was here, Mr. Boardman, one of our preachers, came to see me; and by Mr. Wesley's and his desire, I came to London. After I arrived, my disorder grew worse and worse, almost every day. On April 6th I was so ill, that all about me thought I was dying. Dr. Lettsome attended me very constantly, without fee or reward. He was of great service to me. For, through the means he made use of, the fever was soon removed.

When I was first taken ill, the Lord removed all uneasiness from my mind. I received great comfort in my soul, and could rejoice in the God of my salvation. Indeed, a sense of His goodness continued with me in all my afflictions; which was a cause of such cheerfulness, as I had scarce known for twenty years before. I could frequently sing,

“ How good Thou art, how large Thy grace!  
How easy to forgive!  
The helpless Thou delight’st to raise,  
And by Thy love I live.”

I now look back on the labour of three-and-thirty years, and I do not repent of it. I am not grown weary either of my Master, or the work I am engaged in. Though I am weak in body, and in the decline of life, my heart is still engaged in the cause of God. I am never more happy than when I feel the love of Christ in my heart, and am declaring His praise to

others. There is nothing like the love of Christ in the heart to make us holy and happy. It is love alone that expels all sin out of the heart. Wherever love is wanting, there is hell; and where love fills the heart, there is heaven. This has been a medicine to me ever since I set out. When I was low, it was this that raised me up. When sin and Satan beset me on every side, it was this that drove them away.

“O Love, how cheering is thy ray !  
All pain before thy presence flies :  
Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away,  
Where ’er thy healing beams arise.  
O Jesus, nothing may I see,  
Nothing desire, or seek, but Thee !

“Unwearied may I this pursue,  
Dauntless to the high prize aspire ;  
Hourly within my breast renew  
This holy flame, this heavenly fire ;  
And day and night be all my care,  
To guard the sacred treasure there.

“In suffering, be Thy love my peace,  
In weakness be Thy love my power :  
And when the storms of life shall cease,  
Jesus, in that important hour,  
In death, as life, be Thou my guide,  
And save me, who for me hast died.”

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ACCORDING to the Minutes of Conference, Mr. Mitchell was appointed to the Keighley Circuit in the year 1783. This appears to have been his last station as an effective preacher. The next year his name occurs in the list of those who had retired

from the labours of the regular itinerancy, and were supported by the Preachers' Fund, as supernumeraries. In 1785 the answer to the usual question, "Who have died this year?" is, "Thomas Mitchell, an old soldier of Jesus Christ."

Mr. Mitchell is said to have been a man of slender abilities as a preacher, and to have enjoyed only a very defective education. But he was a person of deep piety, and of exemplary simplicity and zeal. A holy unction attended his earnest ministrations; and he was very successful in the conversion of ungodly men to Christ. It is said that the late Mr. Hey, of Leeds, during his connexion with the Methodists of that town, once took his friend Dr. Priestley to the chapel, to hear Mr. John Hampson, when, to his disappointment and mortification, Mr. Mitchell occupied the pulpit. After the service, Mr. Hey apologized to his learned and philosophic friend, for the absence of the popular speaker whom they had expected to hear, and for the simple and unpretending ministrations of the man by whom they had been addressed. He was soon given to understand that no apology was necessary. The doctor discerned the true character of Mr. Mitchell, and pronounced upon him the significant eulogium: "Mr. Hampson may be useful, for he is an able man, and a good preacher; but this man must do good, for he aims at nothing else."

THE LIFE  
OF  
MR. PETER JACO.

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WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I AM sorry that I cannot comply with your desire so effectually as I could wish ; having left the papers containing the particulars of God's dealings with me some hundred miles off. At present I can only give you some circumstances as they occur to my memory.

I was born of serious parents, at Newlyn, near Penzance, in Cornwall, in the year 1729. When capable of learning, I was put to school, where I continued till I was near fourteen ; but, being of a gay, lively disposition, and my master being given to drink to excess, (on which account I soon learned to despise both him and his instructions,) did not make that proficiency which I otherwise might have done. As I could not endure the school under such a teacher, my father took me home, and proposed several businesses to me ; but I chose rather to be under his care, and to be employed with him in the

pilchard-fishery : first, because I knew him to be a perfect master of his business ; and, secondly, because I knew he was a truly serious man.

From my infancy, I had very serious impressions, and awful thoughts of God ; which, with the care and precepts of my parents, prevented my running into many excesses incident to youth : though in other respects I was bad enough. I was exceeding proud, passionate, and ambitious ; and so fond of pleasure, that at any time I would neglect my ordinary meals to pursue it. But amidst all my follies, I was still miserable ; and often to such a degree, that I wished I was anything but a rational creature. After many a restless night, I was ready to say, with Job, “ He scareth me with dreams, and terrifieth me with visions.” I frequently resolved to leave my sins : but, alas ! my goodness soon vanished away. Thus I repented and sinned ; and as I was totally ignorant where my strength lay, I was frequently at the point of giving up all striving against the torrent ; and of gratifying every passion as far as my circumstances would permit.

About the year 1746 God sent His messenger into our parts, who proclaimed free and full redemption in the blood of Christ. But though this was the very thing my conscience told me I wanted, yet I would not give up all to come to Him. No : I would dispute for His servants, fight for them, (an instance of which you, dear sir, saw the first time you preached on the green between Penzance and Newlyn, when a few lads rescued you from a wicked mob,) but I would come no nearer. However, going one Sunday night to hear Stephen Nichols, a plain, honest tinner, the word took strange hold on me, and seemed like fire in my bones. I returned filled with astonish-

ment, retired to my apartment, and, for the first time, began to take a serious review of my past life, and present situation with regard to eternity. My eyes were now truly opened. I saw myself a poor, naked, helpless sinner, without any plea, but "God be merciful to me." My convictions became more and more alarming, till I was driven to the brink of despair. And though my religious acquaintance (for I immediately joined the society) did all they could to encourage me, I would often say, "I have no hope." In this deplorable state I continued near four months, when one Sunday, (may I never forget it!) as I was attending to the exhortation before the sacrament, when the minister pronounced, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself," (a very wrong translation,) "not discerning the Lord's body;" I immediately concluded, "Then I am lost for ever." Yet, through the persuasion of my father, I stayed; and I resolved, if I did perish, I would perish in the means of grace. Accordingly, in the afternoon, I set out by myself for church, a mile distant from the town, for solitude was all my comfort. I had not walked far, before it was strongly suggested to my mind, "Jesus Christ died for the vilest sinner." I immediately replied, "Then I am the wretch for whom He died!" In that moment it seemed to me as though a new creation had taken place. I felt no guilt, no distress of any kind. My soul was filled with light and love. I could no more doubt of my acceptance with God through Christ, than I could of my own existence. In this state I continued near two years, and am firmly persuaded might have still continued in it, but for my own unfaithfulness.

I was now convinced it was my duty to do all I

could for God; and, accordingly, reproved sin wherever I saw it, without regard to the character or station of the person; and, wherever I found a disposition to receive it, added a word of exhortation.

Some years after, my friends thought I might be more useful, if I was to exhort in the society: with much reluctance I made the attempt; but, though God blessed, in a very remarkable manner, my feeble efforts, I was with difficulty persuaded to continue it.

When you, sir, visited us in 1751, you persuaded me to enlarge my sphere, and appointed me to visit several societies. I accordingly complied, but still with unwillingness. In your next visit to Cornwall, you thought I was not so useful as I might be, and proposed my taking a Circuit. This I could by no means think of. I looked on myself as an occasional helper, having a good deal of time on my hands; and if a preacher was ill, or unable to keep his Circuit, I thought it my indispensable duty to fill his place. But, though I knew I was called to this, I could not see that I should go farther, on account of the smallness of both my gifts and grace.

In the year 1753 you proposed my going to Kingswood School: and accordingly, having settled the terms, I set out for Bristol in April, 1754; but, to my great disappointment, I found the school full, and a letter from you, desiring me to come immediately to London. This, together, with your brother's telling me, that if I returned back to my business, he should not wonder if I turned back into the world, determined me to comply with your desire. At the Conference in London, the 4th of May, 1754, I was appointed for the Manchester Circuit, which then took in Cheshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, and part of Yorkshire. Here God so blessed

my mean labours, that I was fully convinced He had called me to preach His Gospel. Meantime my hardships were great. I had many difficulties to struggle with. In some places the work was to begin; and in most places, being in its infancy, we had hardly the necessaries of life; so that after preaching three or four times a day, and riding thirty or forty miles, I have often been thankful for a little clean straw, with a canvas sheet, to lie on. Very frequently we had also violent oppositions. At Warrington I was struck so violently with a brick on the breast, that the blood gushed out through my mouth, nose, and ears. At Grampound I was pressed for a soldier; kept under a strong guard for several days, without meat or drink, but what I was obliged to procure at a large expense; and threatened to have my feet tied under the horse's belly, while I was carried eight miles before the commissioners: and though I was honourably acquitted by them, yet it cost me a pretty large sum of money, as well as much trouble.

For many years I was exposed to various other difficulties and dangers. But, having obtained help from God, I continue to this day! And, all thanks to Him, I wish to live and die in His service. At present I find my mind as much devoted to Him as I ever did. I see and feel the necessity of a greater conformity to Christ. May I never be satisfied till I awake up after His likeness!

Thus, dear sir, I have given you a brief account of my life, as far as my memory would assist me. If it is useful to any soul, my purpose is fully answered.

PETER JACO.

LONDON, October 4th, 1778.

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IT is stated by Mr. Atmore, that Mr. Jaco was remarkably comely in his person, tall and handsome, and possessed an amiable natural temper. His understanding was strong and clear; and he had acquired much useful knowledge, which rendered him an agreeable companion. His talents for the Christian ministry were very considerable; and he was a scribe well instructed in the things of God. In consequence of bodily indisposition, he was compelled, for several years before his death, to desist from his itinerant labours. He died in peace at Margate, in Kent; and his remains were interred in the burying-ground connected with the City-Road chapel, London; where a stone, erected to his memory, bears the following inscription:—"In memory of Mr. Peter Jaco, who died July 6th, 1781, aged fifty-two years.

' Fisher of men, ordain'd by Christ alone,  
Immortal souls he for his Saviour won;  
With loving faith, and calmly-potent zeal,  
Perform'd and suffer'd the Redeemer's will;  
Steadfast in all the storms of life remain'd,  
And in the good old ship the haven gain'd.' "

The following original letter of Mr. Jaco is worth preserving. It was addressed to Mrs. Hall, of London:—

" NEWLYN, NEAR PENZANCE, Sept. 11th, 1776.

" HAVING a few minutes of freedom from multitudes pressing on every side, to ask me how I do, and bid me welcome once more to the place of my nativity, I with pleasure embrace the opportunity of fulfilling my promise to my much-esteemed and valued friend. Perhaps it may not be unentertaining to give a brief account of my journey to this world's

end, which is upwards of three hundred miles from London.

“ On Thursday, August 29th, at six o’clock in the morning, Mr. Folgham and your friend set out. We travelled hard all the day, being allowed fifteen minutes for breakfast, and twenty for dinner; but no tea, nor any supper. We arrived at Salisbury at seven o’clock; stayed half-an-hour for Mr. Folgham, who had some business to do; and then set out for Blandford, in Dorset, twenty-three miles from Salisbury, across the plain and open country, without any enclosures. The night was remarkably fine. The moon was full; and there was not a cloud in the sky to obstruct her light. Not a breath of wind was stirring, nor any living creature near, except large flocks of sheep, penned on each side of the road, whose innocent bleating, reverberating from the adjacent hills, rendered the scene awfully delightful. All the fine sentiments dispersed through the ‘Night Thoughts’ crowded upon my imagination; more especially those in the ‘Ninth Night,’ where the author has given us a picture at large, which I would recommend to your serious perusal. I was much affected with that instructive passage:—

‘Night is fair Virtue’s immemorial friend;  
The conscious moon, through every distant age,  
Has held a lamp to wisdom.’

“ But, alas, like all transitory scenes, this pleasant night gave way to a gloomy rainy morning, when the bleak winds, coming down from the stupendous mountains, attended by impetuous floods, formed a contrast the most disagreeable.

“ Nothing memorable happened till Saturday afternoon, when I had the pleasure of seeing our

worthy friend Mr. Wesley, who received me with the warmest affection.

"At Plymouth-Dock I stayed till Tuesday morning, and then set out on horseback for this place; full ninety miles. Through the infinite mercy of God, I arrived safe on Monday evening, to the great joy of an affectionate father.

"My apartment here is, perhaps, the most agreeable that you ever saw. I have two neat chambers, built upon the extreme margin of the shore. A large bay opposite my windows is twenty-one miles long and twelve wide; so that at this moment I can see nearly twenty sail of ships, and upwards of a hundred large fishing-boats, passing and repassing. Nothing on earth can be more agreeable to me. Yet I must soon part with it. I have no home but heaven. God grant that I may not fall short of it!

"I hope this will find you resolved to be a Christian indeed; determined to take heaven by violence. Nothing short of this will do. Christ cannot approve of any sacrifice but that of the heart; and not even of this, without a surrender of the whole. O, give it Him. He is worthy of it. It is His undoubted right. He has paid dearly for the purchase. Let Him have it, in God's name. This is perhaps the most critical period of your whole life.\* You have need of all your understanding and prudence. Above all, you have need of much prayer, that God may direct and keep you in every step you take.

"How long I shall stay here I know not. I have done nothing yet; and when I shall do anything I

\* At this period Mrs. Hall had lately become the youthful and unencumbered widow of a negligent spendthrift. She was possessed of great personal beauty, and of sprightly conversational talent. In her second choice, she profited by the advice of her friend.

cannot tell. Perhaps I shall do nothing, after all my expense and trouble, except that of getting a few fair promises of amendment from my brothers, which may last while I am on the spot.

“Your affectionate and obliged friend,  
“PETER JACO.”

THE LIFE  
OF  
MR. JOHN HAIME.

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WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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1. I WAS born at Shaftesbury, Dorsetshire, in 1710. My father followed gardening, and brought me up to the same employment for several years; but I did not like it, and longed for some business that would allow me more liberty. In the mean time, I was very undutiful to my parents, and much given to cursing, swearing, lying, and Sabbath-breaking: but I was not easy in these ungodly practices, being often afraid that the devil would carry me away.

2. I was then placed with my uncle to learn to make buttons. I liked this well at first, but was soon tired of it. However, I stayed out the year; but my uncle then removing to Blandford, I was out of business. I wrought in many places, but stayed in none; being like the troubled sea, that cannot rest. After some time, I went to my uncle at Blandford, and wrought with him about a quarter of

a year. But still I found no satisfaction in anything, neither in working, eating, drinking, nor sleeping; though neither I myself, nor any of my acquaintance, could imagine what was the matter with me.

3. Some time after, as I was working alone, the devil broke in upon me with reasonings, concerning the being of a God, till my senses were almost gone. He then so strongly tempted me to blaspheme God, that I could not withstand. He then told me, "Thou art inevitably damned;" and I readily believed him; for I thought, Though I have not cursed God outwardly, yet He looketh at the heart. This consideration made me sink into despair, as a stone in the mighty waters.

4. I now began to wander about at the river-side, and through woods and solitary places, looking up to heaven with many times a heart ready to break, thinking I had no part there. I thought every one happy but myself; the devil continually telling me, there was no mercy for me. Yet I thought it was hard to be banished for ever from the presence of a merciful God. I cried to Him for help, but I found no relief: it seemed to be all in vain; so I said, like the men of Judah, "There is no hope;" and then gave the reins to my evil desires; not caring which end went foremost, but giving myself up again to wicked company, and all their evil ways.

5. If at any time I grew uneasy again, I stifled it by drinking, swearing, card-playing, lewdness, and the like works of darkness, which I then pursued with all greediness. I was hastening on to eternal destruction, when the great tremendous God met me as a lion in the way; and His Holy Spirit, whom I had been so long grieving, returned with greater

force than ever. I had no rest day or night. I was afraid to go to bed, lest the devil should fetch me away before morning. I was afraid to shut my eyes, lest I should awake in hell. I was terrified when asleep, sometimes dreaming that many devils were in the room, ready to take me away; sometimes, that the world was at an end, and that I was not ready to appear before the Judge of quick and dead. At other times, I thought I saw the world on fire, and the wicked left to burn therein, with myself among them; and when I awoke, my senses were almost gone.

6. I was often on the point of destroying myself; and was stopped I know not how. Then did I weep bitterly; I mourned like a dove; I chattered like a swallow. But I thought, Though my anguish is very great, it is not like those that are lifting up their eyes in torments. Then, for a few moments, I felt thankfulness to God. But still the thoughts of death and judgment followed me closely for upwards of two years, till all my bodily strength was gone. Returning home one day, and sitting down in a chair, my mother, observing my pale look and low voice, asked, "What is the matter with you?" but I durst not tell her; so I turned it off.

7. One night as I was going to bed, I durst not lie down without prayer. So, falling upon my knees, I began to consider, "What can I pray for? I have neither the will nor the power to do anything good." Then it darted into my mind, "I will not pray, neither will I be beholden to God for mercy." I arose from my knees without prayer, and laid me down; but not in peace. I never had such a night before. I was as if my very body had been in a fire; and I had a hell in my conscience. I was tho-

roughly persuaded the devil was in the room ; and I fully expected, every moment, that he would be let loose upon me. I judged myself to be one of the worst creatures that God ever made. I thought I had sinned beyond the reach of mercy. Yet all this time I kept to the church, though I was often afraid to go there, lest the church or the tower should fall upon me.

8. In spring, I was employed by a tanner, to go with his carriage and fetch dried bark. As I was returning by myself, I was violently tempted to blaspheme, yea, and to hate God : at length, having a stick in my hand, I threw it toward heaven against God, with the utmost enmity. Immediately I saw in the clear element a creature like a swan, but much larger, part black, part brown. It flew at me, and went just over my head. Then it went about forty yards, lighted on the ground, and stood staring upon me. This was in a clear day, about twelve o'clock. I strove to pray, but I could not. At length God opened my mouth. I hastened home, praying all the way, and earnestly resolving to sin no more. But I soon forgot my resolution, and multiplied my sins as the sands on the seashore.

9. To complete all, I enlisted myself a soldier in the queen's regiment of dragoons. When we marched for Gloucester, on Christmas-day in the morning, 1739, the thoughts of parting with all my friends, my wife, and children, were ready to break my heart. My sins likewise came all to my remembrance, and my trouble increased night and day. Nevertheless, when I became acquainted with my comrades, I soon returned as a dog to the vomit. Yet God soon renewed my good desires. I began to read and pray, and to go to church every day. But

frequently I was so tempted there, that it was as much as I could do to avoid blaspheming aloud. Satan suggested, "Curse him! curse him!" perhaps a hundred times. My heart as often replied, "No! no! no!" Then he suggested, "Thou hast sinned against the Holy Ghost." But I still cried unto God, though the deep waters flowed over me, and despair closed me in on every side.

10. Soon after we marched to camp at King's Clear, in Hampshire. Thence we removed to winter-quarters, at Farringdon. I was still deeply miserable through sin, but not conqueror over it. This was still my language :—

"Here I repeat, and sin again;  
Now I revive, and now am slain!  
Slain with the same unhappy dart,  
Which, O! too often wounds my heart!"

11. After this, I was quartered at Highworth, in Wiltshire. Among many old books which were here, I found one entitled, "Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners." I read it with the utmost attention, and found his case almost resembled my own. Having, soon after, orders to march for Scotland, we marched the first day to Banbury, where I found again, in a bookseller's shop, "Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners." I bought it, and thought it the best book I ever saw; and again I felt some hopes of mercy. In every town where we stayed, I went to church: but I did not hear what I wanted,—"Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world."

12. Being come to Alnwick, Satan desired to have me, that he might sift me as wheat. And the hand of the Lord came upon me with such weight, as made me roar for very anguish of spirit. I could

truly say, "The arrows of the Almighty are within me; the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit." Many times I stopped in the street, afraid to go one step farther, lest I should step into hell. Then I cried unto the Lord, and said, "Why hast Thou set me as a mark? Let loose Thy hand, and cut me off, that I sin no more against Thee." I said, "Is Thy mercy clean gone for ever? And must I perish at last? Save, Lord, or I perish!" But there was no answer; so all hope was cut off.

13. I now read, and fasted, and went to church, and prayed seven times a day. One day, as I walked by the Tweed side, I cried aloud, being all athirst for God, "O that Thou wouldest hear my prayer, and let my cry come up before Thee!" The Lord heard: He sent a gracious answer: He lifted me up out of the dungeon. He took away my sorrow and fear, and filled my soul with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The stream glided sweetly along, and all nature seemed to rejoice with me. I was truly free; and had I had any to guide me, I need never more have come into bondage. But I was so ignorant, I thought I should know war no more. I began to be at ease in Sion, and forgot to watch and pray, till God laid His hand upon me again. I then again went mourning all the day long; till one Sunday, as I was going to church, I stood still like a condemned criminal before his judge, and said, "Lord, what am I going to church for? I have nothing to bring or offer Thee, but sin and a deceitful heart." I had no sooner spoken, than my heart melted within me, and I cried earnestly to Him for mercy. But suddenly something ran through my veins cold as ice. I was afraid to stay; and arose, and left the room: but

reflecting that God is above the devil, I went in again. I fell down before the Lord, with bitter cries and tears, till my strength failed me, and it was with difficulty I could walk out of the room.

14. The next morning, as I was going to water my horse, just as he entered the river, in a moment, I felt the love of God flowing into my soul. Instantly all pain and sorrow fled away. No fear of hell or the devil was left; but love to God and all mankind now filled my ravished soul. As the people with whom I quartered had often the Bible and other good books in their hands, I told them what God had done for my soul; but they understood me not. However, I doubted not but my comrade would rejoice with me, being counted a religious man. But I was disappointed again: his answer was, "Take care; for Satan can transform himself into an angel of light." Finding none who were able to give me any instruction or direction, I soon got into unprofitable reasonings, which damped my fervour; so that in a little time I was again in heaviness.

15. Soon after, I was sent with the camp-equipage to London. The next day I marched for Leith. I had scarcely set out, when God was pleased to reveal Himself in a most comfortable manner to my soul; and my comfort increased all the day, so that I hardly knew how I went. We waited for the ship seven days. During this time I was off my watch again: so that before we sailed I was weak and like another man. For two days we had pleasant weather; but on the third the wind suddenly arose, attended with furious rain. The seas frequently covered the ship, and, in the midst of our distress, broke in the hatches. I was

not, as Jonah, "asleep in the sides of the ship," but was just at my wit's end. I uttered a lifeless prayer with many tears, expecting every moment the sea to be my grave. I was grieved that I had so abused the goodness of God, and troubled beyond expression. The storm lasted two nights: then God was pleased to still the winds and seas.

16. At our arrival in London, I was somewhat refreshed in spirit, being truly thankful that I was out of hell. But I was soon in the depth of despair again, afraid of dropping into hell every moment. Soon after I went to hear Mr. Cennick, (then one of Mr. Whitefield's preachers,) at Deptford. Coming back, I told him the distress of my soul. He said, "The work of the devil is upon you;" and then rode away. It was of the tender mercies of God that I did not put an end to my life. I cried, "O Lord, my punishment is greater than I can bear."

17. Yet I thought, If I must be damned myself, I will do what I can that others may be saved. So I began to reprove open sin, whenever I saw or heard it; and to warn the ungodly, that if they did not repent, they would surely perish. But if I found any that were weary and heavy-laden, I told them to wait upon the Lord, and He would renew their strength. Yet I found no strength myself, till reading one day, in what manner God manifested Himself to Mr. Cennick, I cried out, "Lord, if there be any mercy for me, reveal it to me!" I was answered by so strong an impression on my heart as left me without a doubt,—"I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Immediately my soul melted within me, and I was filled with joy unspeakable.

18. Having joined my regiment again, we marched to Colchester. Here I found much peace, and com-

munion with God, which humbled me to the dust. Our next remove was to Brentford, where I had the happiness of hearing Mr. Charles Wesley preach. When the service was over, I had a great desire of speaking to him, but knew not how to be so bold. Yet, taking courage, I ventured to tell him my situation of mind. He gave me much encouragement, and bade me go on and not fear, neither be dismayed at any temptation. His words sunk deep, and were a great blessing to me for several years.

19. Soon after, we had an order to march for Flanders. This threw me into fresh reasoning. The thought of leaving my country, and the danger ensuing by sea and land, sat heavily upon my spirit. I soon lost my peace, nay, and my hope too. I knew I had "tasted of the good word, and of the powers of the world to come." Yet this gave me no comfort. Nay, it aggravated my sorrow, to think of losing all that God had done for me. But the more I struggled the deeper I sunk, till I was quite swallowed up of sorrow. And though I cried unto God, yea, with strong cries and tears, yet for a long time I had no comfortable answer.

20. For a long time I was so dejected and confused, that I had no heart to keep a regular account of anything. In this state I was when we embarked for Flanders, in June, 1742, and as long as we stayed there. It was on February 18th, 1743, that we began our march from Ghent to Germany. When I came to my quarters, my heart was ready to break, thinking I was upon the very brink of hell. We halted six days, and then marched again. The day following, as soon as I had mounted my horse, the love of God was shed abroad in my heart.

I knew God for Christ's sake had forgiven all my sins; and felt "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." This I enjoyed about three weeks, but then lost it by grieving the Holy Spirit of God. I then walked about much cast down, and knew not what to do. But, April 22d, the Lord showed me that I did not live as became the Gospel of Christ: I was greatly ashamed before God. In the evening, as I was walking in the fields with a heavy heart, I prayed earnestly to God that He would smite the rock, and cause the waters to flow. He answered my prayer. My head was as waters, and my eyes as a fountain of tears. I wept, I sang; I had such a sense of the love of God as surpasses all description. Well might Solomon say, "Love is strong as death." Now I saw I had "a right to the tree of life;" and I knew if I then put off the body, I should enter into eternal life.

21. Feeling I wanted help both from God and man, I wrote to Mr. Wesley, who sent me a speedy answer, as follows:—

"It is a great blessing, whereof God has already made you a partaker: but if you continue waiting upon Him, you shall see greater things than these. This is only the beginning of the kingdom of heaven, which He will set up in your heart. There is yet behind the fulness of the mind that was in Christ; righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is but a little thing that men should be against you, while you know that God is on your side. If He give you any companion in the narrow way, it is well; and it is well if He do not. So much the more will He teach and strengthen you by Himself: He will strengthen you in the secret of your heart; and by and by He will raise up, as it were, out of

the dust, those who shall say, ‘Come, and let us magnify His name together.’ But by all means, miss no opportunity. Speak and spare not: declare what God has done for your soul: regard not worldly prudence: be not ashamed of Christ, or of His word, or of His servants: speak the truth in love, even in the midst of a crooked generation; and all things shall work together for good, until the work of God is perfect in your soul.”

22. We now marched on through a pleasant country; and my soul was full of peace. I did speak, and spare not, with little interruption. Only at one time, when I was speaking of the goodness of God, one of our officers (and one that was accounted a very religious man!) told me, “You deserve to be cut in pieces, and to be given to the devil.” But I was enabled (blessed be God) to love, pity, and pray for him.

23. After a long and tiresome march, we arrived at Dettingen. Here we lay in camp for some time, very near the French; only the river Mayne ran between us. June 16th, I was ordered out on the grand guard with all expedition. When we came to the place appointed, I saw many of the French army marching on the other side of the river. It was not long before I heard the report of a French cannon. I said, “We shall have a battle to-day;” but my comrades did not believe me. Presently I heard another, and then a third: the ball came along by us. Many of the French had crossed the river, and many more were in full march towards it. We had orders to return with all speed. The firing increased very fast: and several were killed, or wounded; some by the cannon-balls, some by the limbs of the

trees which the balls cut off. Meantime we marched on one side of the river; part of the French army on the other. The battle was soon joined with small arms as well as cannon, on both sides. It was very bloody: thousands, on each side, were sent to their long home. I had no sooner joined the regiment than my left-hand man was shot dead. I cried to God, and said, "In Thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded." My heart was filled with love, peace, and joy, more than tongue can express. I was in a new world. I could truly say, "Unto you that believe He is precious." I stood the fire of the enemy seven hours. And when the battle was over, I was sent out with a party of men to find the baggage-wagons, but returned without success. In the meanwhile the army was gone, and I knew not which way. I went to the field where the battle was fought, but such a scene of human misery did I never behold! It was enough to melt the most obdurate heart. I knew not now which way to take, being afraid of falling into the hands of the enemy. But as it began to rain hard, I set out, though not knowing where to go; till hearing the beat of the drum, I went towards it, and soon rejoined the army. But I could not find the tent which I belonged to, nor persuade them to take me in at any other. So, being very wet and much fatigued, I wrapped myself up in my cloak, and lay down and fell asleep. And though it still rained upon me, and the water ran under me, I had as sweet a night's rest as ever I had in my life.

24. We had now to return from Germany to Flanders, to take up our winter-quarters. In our march, we were some time near the river Mayne. Twenty miles from the field of battle, we saw the

dead men lie in the river, and on the bank, as dung upon the earth. Many of the French, attempting to pass the river after we had broken down the bridge, were drowned, and many cast upon the banks, where there was none to bury them.

25. Being in Ghent, I went one Sunday morning to the English church at the usual time. But neither minister nor people came. As I was walking in the church, two men belonging to the train came in, John Evans and Pitman Stag. One of them said, "The people are long in coming." I said, "Yet they think, however they live, of going to heaven when they die. But most of them, I fear, will be sadly disappointed." They stared at me, and asked me what I meant. I told them, "Nothing unholy can dwell with a holy God." We had a little more talk, and appointed to meet in the evening. I found John Evans a strict Pharisee, "doing justly, and loving mercy," but knowing nothing of "walking humbly with his God." But the cry of Pitman Stag was, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" We took a room without delay, and met every night to pray and read the holy Scriptures. In a little time we were as speckled birds, as "men wondered at" But some began to listen under the window, and soon after desired to meet with us. Our meetings were soon sweeter than our food ; and I found therein such an enlargement of soul, and such an increase of spiritual knowledge, that I resolved to go, come life, or come death.

26. We had now twelve joined together, several of whom had already found peace with God : the others were earnestly following after it ; and it was not long before they attained. Hereby new love and zeal were kindled in us all ; and although Satan assaulted us

various ways, yet were we enabled to discern all his wiles, and to withstand all his power. Several of them are now safely landed on the blissful shore of a glorious immortality ; where, as a weather-beaten bark, worn out with storms, may I, at last, happily arrive, and find the children whom God has been graciously pleased to give me through the word of His power.

27. One night after our meeting, I told the people, we should have the room full before we left the city. We soon increased to about twenty members ; and love increased so, that shame and fear vanished away. Our singing was heard afar off, and we regarded not those who made no account of our labours. Such was the increase of our faith, love, and joy in the Holy Ghost, that we had no barren meetings. Such was our love to each other, that even the sight of each other filled our hearts with divine consolation. And as love increased among us, so did convictions among others ; and in a little time we had a large society. So that now (as I had told them before) the room was too small to hold the people.

28. May 1st, 1744, we marched from Ghent, and encamped near Brussels. Our camp lay to the side of a hill : we set up our standing on a hill just opposite. We were easily heard by the soldiers in the camp ; who soon began to “ fly as a cloud, and as doves to the windows.” Here I gathered together my scattered sheep and lambs. They were the joy of my heart ; and I trust to find them again among that “ great multitude that no man can number.” O what a work did God put into my hands ! And who is sufficient for these things ? But God had given me such a faith, that had I continued steadfast

in the grace of God, neither things present, nor things to come, nor any creature, could have hindered my growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ unto my dying hour.

29. I took great delight in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews. I read it over and over, and prayed much for faith. This was first in the day, and last at night, in my mind ; and I had no more doubt of the promises contained therein, than if God had called to me from heaven, and said, "This is My word, and it shall stand for ever." When I began preaching, I did not understand one text in the Bible, so as to speak from it in (what is called) a regular manner ; yet I never wanted either matter or words. So hath God, in all ages, "chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty." I usually had a thousand hearers, officers, common soldiers, and others. Was there ever so great a work before, in so abandoned an army ? But we can only say, there is nothing too hard for God ! He worketh what, and by whom, He pleaseth.

30. I was now put to a stand. I had so much duty to do, the society to take care of, and to preach four or five times a day, that it was more than I could well perform. But God soon took care for this also. I looked for no favour from man : I wanted nothing from man : I feared nothing : God did so increase my love and zeal. Light and heat filled my soul, and it was my meat and drink to do the will of my heavenly Father. I cried earnestly to Him to clear my way and remove all hindrances. Glory be to His name ! He did so : for two years after this time I was entirely at my liberty. I found means of hiring others to do my duty, which proved an unspeakable advantage. The work was great before ;

but we soon found a greater increase of it than ever. If Christianity consist in love and obedience to God, and love to all men, friends and enemies, we had now got a Christian society : we had the good land in possession. But this was not enough : still there was an earnest cry in our souls for all the mind that was in Christ, as there was in David for “ the water of the well at Bethlehem.”

31. Our general method was, as soon as we were settled in any camp, to build a tabernacle, containing two, three, or four rooms, as we saw convenient. One day three officers came to see our chapel, as they called it. They asked many questions : one in particular asked me what I preached. I answered, “ I preach against swearing, whoring, and drunkenness ; and exhort men to repent of all their sins, that they may not perish.” He began swearing horribly, and said, if it were in his power, he would have me whipped to death. I told him, “ Sir, you have a commission over men ; but I have a commission from God to tell you, you must either repent of your sins, or perish everlastinglly.” He went away, and I went on, being never better than when I was preaching or at prayer. For the Lord gave such a blessing to His word, that I thought every discourse lost, under which no one was either convinced or converted to God.

32. We had now three hundred in the society, and six preachers, besides myself. It was therefore no wonder that many of the officers and chaplains endeavoured to stop the work. But it was altogether lost labour. He that sitteth in heaven laughed them to scorn. And I doubt not but He would have given me strength to suffer death, rather than have given them up.

33. It was reported by many that I was utterly distracted. Others endeavoured to incense the field-marshall against me. I was examined several times ; but, blessed be God ! He stood by me, and encouraged me to go on, to speak, and not to hold my peace ; neither did He suffer any man to set upon me to hurt me. And so great were my love and joy in believing, that they carried me above all those things which would otherwise have been grievous to flesh and blood ; so that all was pleasant to me :—

“ The winter’s night and summer’s day  
Fled imperceptibly away.”

I frequently walked between twenty and thirty miles a day ; and preached five-and-thirty times in the space of seven days. So great was my love to God, and to the souls which He had purchased with His own blood. Many times I have forgotten to take my refreshment for ten hours together. I had at this time three armies against me : the French army, the wicked English army, and an army of devils. But I feared them not ; for my life was hid with Christ in God. He supported me through all : and I trust He will be my God and my guide even unto death.

34. While the work of God thus flourished among the English, He visited also the Hanoverian army. A few of them began to meet together, and their number increased daily. But they were quickly ordered to meet no more. They were very unwilling to desist. But some of them being severely punished, the rest did not dare to disobey. It is clear the devil and the world will suffer any man to be anything but a real Christian !

35. My present comrade was an extremely wicked man. He came home one day, cursing and swearing,

that he had lost his money. He searched for it, and, after some time, found it. He threw it on the table, and said, “There is my ducat; but no thanks to God, any more than to the devil.” I wrote down the words, and complained to our commanding officer. After a few days he was tried by a court-martial. The officer asked what I had to say against him. I gave him the words in writing. When he had read them, he asked me if I were not ashamed to take account of such a matter as this. I answered, “No, sir: if I had heard such words spoken against His Majesty King George, would not you have counted me a villain if I had concealed them?” His mouth was stopped, and the man cried for pardon! The captain told him he was worthy of death by the law of God and man; and asked me what I desired to have done. I answered, I desired only to be parted from him, and I hoped he would repent. Orders were given that we should be parted. This also was matter of great thankfulness.

36. From camp we removed to our winter-quarters at Bruges. Here we had a lively society; but our preaching-room was far too small to contain the congregation. There was a very spacious place appointed for the public worship, called the English church. General Sinclair was now our commanding officer. I went to his house, and begged to have leave to speak to him. He told me, if I had business with him, I should have sent my captain, and not come to him myself. I told him, I had the liberty of speaking to the Duke of Cumberland. He then asked me what I wanted. I said, “Please your honour, I come to beg a great favour: that I may have the use of the English church to pray in, and exhort my comrades to flee from the wrath to come.” He was very angry,

and told me I should not preach or pray anywhere but in the barracks. He asked, "But how came you to preach?" I said, "The Spirit of God constrains me to call my fellow-sinners to repentance." He said, "Then you must restrain that Spirit." I told him, "I would die first." He said, "You are in my hand," and turned away in a great rage.

37. I cried to the Lord for more faith, that I might never deny Him, whatsoever I was called to suffer, but might own Him before men and devils; and very soon after, God removed this hindrance out of the way: General Sinclair was removed from Bruges, and General Ponsonby took his place. I went to his house, and was without difficulty admitted to his presence. Upon his asking what I wanted, I said, "I come to beg your honour will grant us the use of the English church, that we may meet together and worship God." He asked, "What religion are you of?" I answered, "Of the Church of England." "Then," said he, "you shall have it." I went to the clerk for the keys; but he said the chaplains forbade it, and I should not have them. The general then gave me an order under his own hand, so that they were delivered. I fixed up advertisements in several parts of the town,—"Preaching every day, at two o'clock, in the English church." And we had every day a numerous congregation, both of soldiers and townsfolk.

38. We had some good singers among us, and one in particular, who was a master of music. It pleased God to make this one great means of drawing many to hear the word. One Sunday, the clerk gave out a psalm: it was sung in a hymn tune; and sung so well, that the officers and their wives were quite delighted with it. The society then agreed to go

all together to church every Sunday. On the next Sunday we began ; and when the clerk gave out the first line of the psalm, one of us set the tune, and the rest followed him. It was a resemblance of heaven upon earth. Such a company of Christian soldiers, singing together with the spirit and the understanding also, gave such a life to the ordinance, that none but the most vicious and abandoned could remain entirely unaffected.

39. The spring following, we took the field again : and on May 11th, 1745, we had a full trial of our faith at Fontenoy. Some days before, one of our brethren, standing at his tent-door, broke out into raptures of joy, knowing his departure was at hand ; and, when he went into the field of battle, declared, “I am going to rest in the bosom of Jesus.” Indeed, this day God was pleased to prove our little flock, and to show them His mighty power. They showed such courage and boldness in the fight as made the officers, as well as soldiers, amazed. When wounded, some cried out, “I am going to my Beloved.” Others, “Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly !” And many that were not wounded earnestly desired “to be dissolved and to be with Christ.” When W. Clements had his arm broken by a musket-ball, they would have carried him out of the battle ; but he said, “No ; I have an arm left to hold my sword : I will not go yet.” When a second shot broke his other arm, he said, “I am as happy as I can be out of paradise.” John Evans, having both his legs taken off by a cannon-ball, was laid across a cannon to die : where, as long as he could speak, he was praising God with joyful lips.

40. For my own part, I stood the hottest fire of the enemy for about seven hours. But I told my

comrades, "The French have no ball made that will kill me this day." After about seven hours, a cannon-ball killed my horse under me. An officer cried out aloud, "Haime, where is your God now?" I answered, "Sir, He is here with me; and He will bring me out of this battle." Presently a cannon-ball took off his head. My horse fell upon me, and some cried out, "Haime is gone!" But I replied, "He is not gone yet." I soon disengaged myself, and walked on, praising God. I was exposed both to the enemy and to our own horse: but that did not discourage me at all; for I knew the God of Jacob was with me. I had a long way to go through all our horse, the balls flying on every side. And all the way lay multitudes bleeding, groaning, or just dead. Surely I was as in the fiery furnace; but it did not singe a hair of my head. The hotter the battle grew, the more strength was given me: I was as full of joy as I could contain. As I was quitting the field, I met one of our brethren with a little dish in his hand, seeking water. I did not know him at first, being covered with blood. He smiled, and said, "Brother Haime, I have got a sore wound." I asked, "Have you got Christ in your heart?" He said, "I have; and I have had Him all this day. I have seen many good and glorious days, with much of God; but I never saw more of it than this day. Glory be to God for all His mercies!" Among the dead there were great plenty of watches, and of gold and silver. One asked me, "Will not you get something?" I answered, "No; I have got Christ. I will have no plunder."

41. But the greatest loss I sustained was that of my fellow-labourers. William Clements was sent to the hospital. John Evans, brothers Bishop and

Greenwood, were killed in the battle. Two others, who used to speak boldly, fell into Antinomianism. So I was left alone: but I was persuaded this also was for my good. And seeing iniquity so much abound, and the love of many waxing cold, it added wings to my devotion. And my faith grew daily, as a tree planted by the water-side.

42. One of these Antinomian preachers professed to be always happy, but was frequently drunk twice a day. One Sunday, when I was five or six miles off, he took an opportunity of venting his devilish opinions. One hasted after me, and begged me to return. I did so; but the mischief was done. He had convinced many that we had nothing to do with the law, either before or after our conversion. When I came in, the people looked greatly confused: I perceived there was a great rent in the society; and, after preaching and prayer, said, "You that are for the old doctrine, which you have heard from the beginning, follow me." Out of the three hundred, I lost about fifty; but the Lord soon gave me fifty more. The two Antinomians set up for themselves, until lying, drunkenness, and many other sins, destroyed both preachers and people, all but a few that came back to their brethren.

43. We had no sacrament administered in the army for a long season. I was greatly troubled, and complained aloud in the open camp of the neglect. The chaplains were exceedingly displeased; but the Duke of Cumberland, hearing of it, ordered that it should be administered every Lord's day, to one regiment or the other.

44. The duke, hearing many complaints of me, inquired who I was; if I did my duty, if I would fight, and if I prayed for a blessing on the king and

his arms : they told his royal highness, I did all this as well as any man in the regiment. He asked, "Then what have you to say against him?" They said, "Why, he prays and preaches so much, that there is no rest for him." Afterwards the duke talked with me himself, and asked me many questions. He seemed so well satisfied with my answers, that he bade me "go on ;" and gave out a general order that I should preach anywhere, and no man should molest me.

45. I was preaching one day, when the duke, unknown, came to hear me. I that day desired the soldiers never to come there, or to any place of public worship, so as to neglect any duty. I exhorted them to be ready at all calls, and to obey those who had the rule over them ; and if called out to battle, to stand fast, yea, if needful, fight up to the knees in blood. I said, "You fight for a good cause, and for a good king, and in defence of your country. And this is no way contrary to the tenderest conscience, as many of you found at the battle of Fontenoy ; when both you and I did our duty, and were all the time filled with love, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

46. I had now for some years endeavoured to keep a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man ; and for nearly three years I had known that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven all my sins. I had enjoyed the full assurance of faith, which made me rejoice in all conditions : wet and weary, cold and hungry, I was happy ; finding a daily increase in faith and love. I had constant communion with the Father and the Son. It was my delight to do good to them that hated me, and to call all sinners to "behold the Lamb of God,

which taketh away the sin of the world." But O ! " how did the mighty fall, and the weapons of war perish !" April 6th, 1746, I was off my watch, and fell by a grievous temptation. It came as quick as lightning : I knew not if I were in my senses ; but I fell, and the Spirit of God departed from me. It was a great mercy that I did not fall into hell ! Blessed be God for that word, " If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But it was twenty years before I found Him to be an Advocate for me with the Father again.

47. My fall was both gradual and instantaneous. I first grew negligent in watching and prayer, and in reading the Scriptures. I then indulged myself more and more ; laying out upon my own appetite what I before gave to my poor brethren. I next began to indulge the lust of my eyes, to look at and covet pleasing things ; till, by little and little, I became shorn of my strength, " having left my former love." For many years I had scrupled buying or selling the least thing on the Lord's day. The 6th of April was on a Sunday. That day I was at Antwerp for forage : several of my comrades desired me to buy them some things, which accordingly I did. I had an inward check, but I overruled it, and quickly after became a prey to the enemy. Instantly my condemnation was so great, that I was on the point of destroying myself : God restrained me from this ; but Satan was let loose, and followed me by day and by night. The agony of my mind weighed down my body, and threw me into a bloody flux. I was carried to a hospital, just dropping into hell. But the Lord upheld me with an unseen hand, quivering over the great gulf.

48. Before my fall, my sight was so strong, that I could look steadfastly on the sun at noon-day. But after it, I could not look a man in the face, nor bear to be in any company. Indeed, I thought myself far more fit for the society of devils than of men ; everything was a burden to me, and grievous to be borne. The roads, the hedges, the trees, everything seemed cursed of God. Nature appeared void of God, and in the possession of the devil. The fowls of the air and the beasts of the field all seemed in league against me. I had not one ray of hope, but a fearful looking-for of fiery indignation. Very frequently Judas was represented to me as hanging just before me. Had I been cut with knives from head to foot, I could not have been more sore in my flesh than I was in my spirit. How true is it, "The spirit of a man may sustain his infirmities ; but a wounded spirit who can bear !"

49. I clearly saw the unshaken faith, the peace, joy, and love which I had cast away, and felt the return of pride, anger, self-will, and every other devilish temper. And I knew, by melancholy experience, that my last state was worse than the first. I was one day drawn into the woods, lamenting my forlorn state, and on a sudden I began to weep bitterly. From weeping I fell to howling, like a wild beast, so that the woods resounded. Yet could I say, notwithstanding my bitter cries, "My stroke is heavier than my groaning." Nevertheless, I could not say, "Lord, have mercy upon me," if I could have purchased heaven thereby.

50. So great was the displeasure of God against me, that He, in a great measure, took away the sight of my eyes. I could not see the sun for more than eight months : even in the clearest summer-

day, it always appeared to me like a mass of blood. At the same time I lost the use of my knees. I cannot describe what I felt. I could truly say, "Thou hast sent fire into my bones." I was often as hot as if I were burning to death : many times I looked to see if my clothes were set on fire. I have gone into a river to cool myself; but it was all the same. For what could quench the wrath of His indignation that was let loose upon me? At other times, in the midst of summer, I have been so cold, that I knew not how to bear it. All the clothes I could put on had no effect, but my flesh shivered, and my very bones quaked. God grant, reader, thou and I may never feel how hot or how cold it is in hell!

51. I was afraid to pray ; for I thought the die was cast, and my damnation sealed. So I thought, it availed not if all the saints upon earth, and all the angels in heaven, should intercede for me. I was angry at God, angry at myself, and angry at the devil. I thought I was possessed with more devils than Mary Magdalene. I cannot remember that I had one comfortable hope for seven years together. Only while I was preaching to others, my distress was a little abated. But some may inquire, What could move me to preach while I was in such a forlorn condition ? They must ask of God, for what I cannot tell : His ways herein are past my finding out.

52. In all my trials, I have, by the grace of God, invariably kept to one point, preaching "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ :" testifying, that "by grace are ye saved through faith : that now is the day of salvation ;" and that this salvation is for all ; that Christ "tasted death

for every one." I always testified, that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord ;" and that if any, though ever so holy, " draw back," they will perish everlastingily. I continually expected this would be my lot : yet, after some years, I attempted again to pray. With this Satan was not well pleased ; for one day, as I was walking alone, and faintly crying for mercy, suddenly such a hot blast of brimstone flashed in my face, as almost took away my breath. And presently after, as I was walking, an invisible power struck up my heels, and threw me violently upon my face.

53. When we came to Holland, I had now and then a spark of hope. One Sunday I went to church, where the Lord's supper was to be administered. I had a great desire to partake of it ; but the enemy came in like a flood to hinder me, pouring in temptations of every kind. I resisted him with my might, till, through the agony of my mind, the blood gushed out of my mouth and nose. However, I was enabled to conquer, and to partake of the blessed elements. So I still waited on God in the way of His judgments, and He led me in a way I had not known.

54. Whatever my inward distress was, I always endeavoured to appear free among the people. And it pleased God to make me fruitful in the land of my affliction. He gave me favour in their sight ; and many children were born unto the Lord. Indeed, I could speak but very little Dutch, with regard to common things ; but when we came to talk of the things of God, I could speak a great deal. And after I have been at prayer, many have told me they could understand almost every word I said. But what was this to me ? I was miserable

still, having no comfortable sense of the presence and favour of God.

55. I had heard of an old experienced Christian at Rotterdam. I went to see him ; and found him in an upper room, furnished like that which the Shunammite prepared for Elisha. He looked at me, but did not speak one word. However, I told him a little of my experience. He looked earnestly at me, and began to speak, and tell me all his heart. He said, he had lived for several years in the favour and love of God, when, thinking himself stronger than he was, Satan got an advantage over him. The Holy Spirit departed from him : his strength was gone, and he knew not where to flee for refuge. For ten years sin held him in its iron bondage, and in inexpressible anguish and despair. But one day, as he was making his complaint to God, on a sudden, light broke in ; sorrow fled away, and his soul was like Amminadib. The change was so great, that he was utterly lost in wonder, love, and praise. He knew God had “created a clean heart, and renewed a right spirit within him.” And he had now lived thirty years without one doubt of what God had wrought. This gave me considerable satisfaction ; but it lasted only a short time.

56. When we were going, for winter-quarters, into a town in Holland, I was sent thither before our troops. A gentleman sent for me, and asked if I knew John Haime. I said, “I am the man.” He said, “A gentlewoman in the town wants to speak with you.” I went to her house, and she bade me welcome. After a little conversation, she asked me, “Do you believe that Christ died for all the world ?” Upon my answering, “I do,” she replied, “I do not believe one word of it. But as you know He died

for you, and I know He died for me, we will only talk of His love to poor sinners." We were soon as well acquainted as if we had lived together many years, and her house became my home. I asked, how many she had in family : she said, seven, beside herself. I asked, "What is to become of all these, that you are so easy about them?" She said, "The Lord will call them in His due time, if they belong to Him." I asked, "Shall we pray for them?" She said, "Yes;" so I began that evening. In a few days, the servant-maid was cut to the heart ; next, one of her sons was convinced of sin, and soon after converted to God. And before we left the town, the whole family were athirst for salvation. When the time of our marching drew near, she was in great trouble ; but there was no help : so we took our leave of each other, to meet no more till the morning of the resurrection.

57. At another time I was quartered at Meerkirk, in Holland, at a young woman's whose father and mother were lately dead. She had many cattle, some of which died daily of the distemper ; but she never murmured. I never before met with a woman so ready in the Scriptures. I could not mention any text but she would readily tell the meaning of it : so that it was no wonder she was thought by others, as well as by herself, to be a prime Christian. I was almost of the same mind at first ; but when I had narrowly observed her, I was thoroughly convinced she was deceived, and judged it my duty to undeceive her. I told her, "You are not born of God : you have not living faith." She heard me with much composure of mind ; but she did not believe me. I continued for three weeks pressing it upon her at all opportunities. And one evening, the

Lord made a few words which I spoke sharper than a two-edged sword. Conviction so fastened upon her heart that she was soon obliged to take to her bed. She lay about seven days in deep distress. She then had a comfortable hope; and this strengthened her body for a few days. But then her convictions returned so heavily, that she was obliged to take her bed again, in great agony of mind. The townspeople were alarmed, and ran in crowds to inquire what was the matter; what could distress her, who had enough of the world's wealth, and was so good a woman? But they gave her no satisfaction. As soon as they were gone, she immediately called for me, and cried out, "O John, I shall go to hell; the devil will carry me away." I said, "No! you shall not go to hell! The Lord died for poor sinners." She lay in this distress about ten days, and was brought to the gates of death. But the good Samaritan then passed by, poured wine and oil into her wounds, and healed both soul and body; so that she broke out, "Jehovah is my strength and my song. He is my salvation! Come, all ye that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul."

58. I now thought it would be a great blessing both to herself and her neighbours, if she would pray with them. She agreed so to do. I commonly prayed first, and she afterwards. Sometimes she prayed half an hour together; and often with such demonstration of the Spirit, as well as such understanding, that the whole house seemed full of the presence of the Lord. At other times she wept like a child, and said, "Lord, what is this that Thou hast done? Thou hast sent a man from another nation as an instrument of saving me from ruin! I was rich

before, and increased in goods, and knew not that I was blind and naked." Many of her friends and neighbours were concerned for her ; but not so much as she was for them, as well knowing they were seeking death in the error of their life. This she declared to them without reserve ; and the publishing this strange doctrine spread our names far and near, not only through the town, but the adjacent country. This brought many from distant towns to see her, who usually returned blessing God for the consolation. Some came upwards of twenty miles in a morning. After breakfast, I used to pray first ; and she went on. Many of our visitants were much affected, and wept bitterly. And the impression did not soon wear off. By this means, we became acquainted with many of the Christians in Holland. They were a free, loving people. So we found them ; and so did many of the Methodist soldiers : for they gave them house-room and firing freely. And is not the promise of the Lord sure ?—" Whoever shall give unto one of these a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, shall in no wise lose his reward."

59. All this time I was still buffeted with sore temptations. I thought I was worse than Cain ; that I had "crucified the Son of God afresh, and put Him to open shame." In rough weather, it was often suggested to me, "This is on your account ! See, the earth is cursed for your sake ; and it will be no better till you are in hell." I expected soon to be a prey for devils, as I was driven from all the happiness I once enjoyed. Frequently the trouble of my mind made me so weak in body, that it was with the greatest difficulty I performed my exercise. The Lord had indeed given me "a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind ; and my life did hang in

doubt before me, and I feared day and night, having no assurance of my life." Often did I wish I had never been converted; often that I had never been born. Sometimes I could not bear the sight of a good man without pain; much less be in his company. Yet I preached every day, and endeavoured to appear open and free to my brethren. I encouraged them that were tempted, "not to fear; the Lord would soon appear for Himself." Meantime, I continued to thunder out the terrors of the law against the ungodly; although some said I was too positive. Too positive! What! in declaring the promises and threatenings of God? Nay, if I cannot be sure of these, I will say to the Bible, as the devil did to our Lord, "What have I to do with Thee?"

60. At one time, I cannot remember that I had any particular temptation for some weeks. Now I thought God had forsaken me, and the devil had no need to trouble himself about me. He then set the case of Francis Spira before me, so that I sunk into black despair. Everything seemed to make against me. I could not open the Bible anywhere but it condemned me. I was much distressed with dreams and visions of the night. I dreamed one night that I was in hell: another, that I was on Mount Etna; that on a sudden it shook and trembled exceedingly; and that at last it split asunder in several places, and sunk into the burning lake,—all but that little spot on which I stood. O, how thankful was I for my preservation! And this continued for awhile, even after I awoke: but then it fled away as a dream.

61. I was often violently tempted to curse, and swear, and blaspheme, before and after, and even while I was preaching. Sometimes, when I was in the midst of the congregation, I could hardly refrain

from laughing aloud, yea, from uttering all kinds of ribaldry and filthy conversation. I thought there was none that loved me now, none that had any concern for my soul ; but that God had taken away from everybody the affection which they once had. I cried out, “I have sinned ! What shall I do unto Thee, O Thou Preserver of men ? Why hast Thou set me as a mark against Thee, so that I am a burden to myself ?” I said, “I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of His wrath.” Frequently, as I was going to preach, the devil has set upon me as a lion, telling me, he would have me just then ; so that it has thrown me into a cold sweat. In this agony, I have catched hold of the Bible and read, “If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” I have said to the enemy, “This is the word of God, and thou canst not deny it.” Hereat he would be like a man that shrunk back from the thrust of a sword. But he would be at me again. I again met him in the same way, till at last (blessed be God !) he fled from me. And even in the midst of the sharpest assaults, God gave me just strength enough to bear them. He fulfilled His word, “My grace is sufficient for thee : My strength is made perfect in thy weakness.” When Satan has strongly suggested, just as I was going to preach, “I will have thee at last,” I have answered, (sometimes with too much anger,) “I will have another out of thy hand first.” And many, while I was myself in the deep, were truly convinced, and converted to God.

62. When I returned to England, and was discharged from the army, I went to Mr. Wesley, and asked if he would permit me to labour with him as a travelling preacher. He was willing : so I immedi-

ately went into a Circuit. But this was far from delivering me from that inexpressible burden of soul under which I still laboured. Hence it was that I could neither be satisfied with preaching nor without it ; and that wherever I went, I was not able to stay long in one place ; but continually wandered to and fro, seeking rest, but finding none. On this account, many thought me very unstable, and looked very coldly upon me, as they were wholly unacquainted with the exercises of soul which I laboured under. I thought if David or Peter had been living, they would have pitied me. But many of my friends had not even tasted of that bread and water of affliction, which had been my meat and drink for many years. May they walk so humbly and closely with God that they may never taste it !

63. After I had continued some time as a travelling preacher, Mr. Wesley took me to travel with him. He knew I was fallen from my steadfastness ; but he knew, likewise, how to bear with me. And when I was absent, he comforted me by his letters, which were a means, under God, of saving me from utter despair. One of them was as follows :—

“LONDON, June 21st, 1748.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“THINK it not strange, concerning the fiery trial which God has seen good to try you with. Indeed, the chastisement for the present is not joyous, but grievous : nevertheless it will, by and by, bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. It is good for you to be in the fiery furnace : though the flesh be weary of it, you shall be purified therein, but not consumed. For there is One with you, whose form is as the Son of God. O, look up ! Take knowledge

of Him who spreads underneath you His everlasting arms! Lean upon Him with the whole weight of your soul! He is yours!—Lay hold upon Him!

‘Away let grief and sighing flee;  
Jesus hath died for thee, for thee.’

“Mercy and peace shall not forsake you. Through every threatening cloud look up; and wait for happy days.”

64. In this miserable condition I went to Shaftesbury to see my friends, and spent several days. When one and another came and asked me, what news, I told them, “Good news!—Christ died to save sinners.” But it seemed to them as an idle tale: they “cared for none of these things.” One day, being half asleep, I was, as it were, thunderstruck with an inward voice, saying, “What doest thou here?” I cried to the Lord for mercy, and gave notice, that on the Sunday following, I would preach in a place at the end of the town, where four ways met. The town and villages round were soon alarmed; and at the time appointed, I believe there were three or four thousand people. My inward trouble seemed suspended. I got upon a wall about seven feet high, and began with prayer. I then gave out my text: “Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” (Mal. iv. 1.) Surely I preached that sermon with the power of the Holy Spirit sent down for heaven. Twelve, if not fourteen, were then convinced of sin; some of whom are, I trust, long ago, safely lodged in

Abraham's bosom. In a few weeks, fifty persons were joined together in society. I now preached in a large room several times a week. But the people were eager to build a house, and appointed a time of meeting to consider of the means; but on that day I was taken up, and put in prison, two men having sworn flatly against me that I had made a riot. After I had been in prison a night and part of a day, I was taken to a public-house. It was soon full of people: I immediately began preaching to them; and the lions quickly became lambs. A messenger then came in, to let me know that I must appear before the mayor and aldermen. I did so. The town-clerk told me, they would not send me to Dorchester gaol if I would work a miracle. I told them, "That is done already. Many swearers and drunkards are become sober, God-fearing men." A lawyer said, "Well, if you will take my advice, you shall not go to prison." I replied, "I suppose you mean, if I will give over preaching: but that I dare not do." I was then, without any more ado, hurried away to Dorchester.

65. My body was now in prison; but that had been a thing of little consequence, had not my soul remained in prison also,—in the dungeon of despair. The gaoler soon came, and fell into conversation with me; but when I began to preach Jesus, as the only Saviour of sinners, he quickly left me to preach to my fellow-prisoners. Many of these, having no righteousness of their own to bring to God, were willing to hear of being saved by grace. So I preached to them several times while I was in prison, and they seemed greatly affected. Meantime, God raised up two Quakers at Shaftesbury, who became bound for my appearance at the Quarter Sessions. I

had been in prison but eight days, when one of these came to fetch me out, and brought money to pay the prison-fees and all other expenses. Had I not been put into prison, it is likely some of these prisoners would never have heard the Gospel. I saw, therefore, that God did all things well. Being come back, I began preaching again ; and God was present with the people. I soon received a letter from a gentleman at London, bidding me employ two counsellors and an attorney, and draw upon him for whatever money I wanted. I carried this letter to the post-master, and asked him if he were willing to let me have money upon it : he said, "Yes, as much as you please." This was soon noised about the town : so the magistrates were glad to make up the matter. And the work of God so increased, that in a little time we had eighty in society.

66. During my great distress of mind, I went twice to Ireland as a travelling preacher ; and in each passage over the sea, I was very near being cast away. October 27th, 1751, I preached at Mount-mellick. The next morning, after I had travelled about two miles, suddenly my senses failed me. I was soon insensible where I was, and where I came from. I supported myself a considerable time by a gate in the road, as I did not know which way to go, nor what place to ask for. At length my understanding returned ; and I began to weep. But what I passed through, I cannot express, so unspeakable was my anguish. But the tender mercy of God supported me therein, that my spirit might not fail before Him.

67. In the beginning of September, 1766, I was living at Shaftesbury, when Mr. Wesley passing through, in his way to Cornwall, I asked if it would

be agreeable for me to be at his house in London a few days: he said, "Yes, as long as you please." But before I set out, I received the following letter:—

"*St. Ives, Cornwall, Sept. 16th, 1766.*

"**MY DEAR BROTHER,**

"I THINK you have no need to go to London: God has, it seems, provided a place for you here. Mr. Hoskins wants a worn-out preacher to live with him, to take care of his family, and to pray with them morning and evening."

I went down. As soon as Mr. Hoskins saw me, he said, "You are welcome to stay here as long as you live." But no sooner did I fix there, than I was, if possible, ten times worse than before. In vain I strove to make myself easy: the more I strove, the more miserable I was. Not that I wanted anything that this world can afford. But can this world satisfy a soul that was made for God? The distress of my mind soon became intolerable: it was a burden too heavy for me to bear. It seemed to me, that unless I got some relief, I must die in despair. One day I retired into the hall, fell on my face, and cried for mercy; but got no answer. I got up, and walked up and down the room, wringing my hands, and crying as if I should break my heart, begging of God, for Christ's sake, if there were any mercy for me, to help me: and, blessed be His name! all on a sudden, I felt such a change, through my soul and body, as is past description. I was afraid I should alarm the whole house with the expressions of my joy. I had a full witness from the Spirit of God that I should not find that bondage any more. Nor have I ever found it to this day. Glory be to God for all His mercies!

68. But, notwithstanding this wonderful change, I had not the faith which I had once. But I found a very great alteration by reading the Scriptures. The promises opened to me more and more; and I expected to find some great thing wrought upon me all at once. But God's ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts. He led me by a way I had not known. He greatly deepened His work in my soul, and drove out His enemies by little and little, till I could clearly say, "Thy will be done." The lion became a lamb; and I found the truth of that word by happy experience: "Thou wilt keep his soul in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee."

69. I now thought I would stay with Mr. Hoskins; for he was very kind to me. But I soon began to be so bound in spirit, that I could hardly pray in the family; nay, I could not ask a blessing on our food, without much hesitation and stammering. And all the comforts of life, which were then in great plenty, became altogether comfortless. Mr. Story being then in the round, I made my complaint to him. He desired me to take his place for a month, while he went into the east of Cornwall. This I gladly undertook; and although, for the space of three weeks, my coat was not once dry upon my back, yet I was warmer within, and far more comfortable, than in the warm parlour.

70. When Mr. Story returned, I thought I would stay at Mr. Hoskins's a few days, and then travel. But the first night I was as restless as ever: so in the morning I took my leave, and in January, 1767, went into the east of Cornwall. I found it was good for me to be there: my faith increased daily. And, blessed be God! I found love, and peace, and joy in

the Holy Ghost, springing up in my soul. I trust God will continue them to my dying day, and then receive me to Himself.

71. I had long been travelling in the wilderness in “a land of deserts and pits, a land of drought and of the shadow of death.” This had been my lot for twenty years: a just judgment of the Almighty for my sin. Blessed be His name, that He did not wholly cast me off! But I saw clearly nothing would avail but a fresh application of the Saviour’s blood to my wounded soul. I had now a happy sense of this: which, with the thoughts of His forbearance twenty years before my conversion, His filling me with His love for three years, His dealings with me in my fallen condition, and my present deliverance, caused my soul to overflow with wonder and praise for His long-suffering goodness. I saw nothing was too hard for God. I could cast myself on the Lord Jesus. All the promises in the Scriptures were full of comfort; particularly this, “I have known thee in the furnace of affliction.” The Scriptures were all precious to my soul, as the rain to the thirsty land. And when Satan assaulted me afresh, I did not stand to reason with him, but fled to the Lord Jesus for refuge. Hereby the snare was soon broken, and I found an increase both of faith, hope, and love. I could now truly say, “The Lord is my Shepherd, therefore shall I lack nothing. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters: He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.”

72. It was not my intention ever to write any account of these things, had not some of my friends greatly pressed me thereto. Nevertheless, I put off

from time to time, being conscious I had no talent for writing, until my peace was well-nigh lost. At last I was prevailed upon to begin. I had not written many lines, before I found my soul in perfect peace. I found myself likewise greatly assisted to recollect the manifold dealings of God with me: so that I have the greatest reason to believe it is His will I should make known, even by these instances of His goodness, that He is "long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." May He bless the feeble attempt to the good of many! May they learn wisdom by the things that I have suffered! And be all the glory ascribed unto Him that "sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever!"

## OF THE DEATH OF MR. HAIME.

BY MR. GEORGE STORY.

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ON the 18th of August, 1784, at Whitchurch, in Hampshire, died that faithful soldier of Christ, Mr. John Haime, in the seventy-eighth year of his age. For more than a twelvemonth past, his health visibly declined. A hectic fever, which continually increased, soon reduced him to skin and bone ; nevertheless, his zeal for the glory of God, and concern for the salvation of sinners, abated not in the least. He preached as long as he was able to speak, and longer than he could stand without support.

On the Sunday before his death he requested the society to attend him in his own room ; and for several minutes powerfully and affectionately exhorted them to persevere to the end, in that faith which worketh by love, and purifieth the heart.

The morning he died, in attempting to get out of bed, he fell down, and was much hurt ; which occasioned violent pain. In about two hours after, the pain being a little abated, he desired to be raised up in bed : and after shaking hands with five or six friends who were present, he prayed for the Divine blessing upon them separately ; then for the church in general ; and, lastly, for the little flock over which he had long been overseer. He then leaned back in bed ; and although the pain was not so intense, yet

there were evident tokens of his approaching dissolution. His strength gradually decreased, and his sight and speech in a great measure failed. Yet he frequently broke out in prayer, in these and such like sentences:—"O Lord, in Thee have I trusted, and have not been confounded. In Thee do I now trust; let me never be confounded. Salvation is of the Lord. I have nothing to bring or to offer unto the Lord, but 'God be merciful to me a sinner!' When my soul departs from this body, a convoy of angels will conduct me to the paradise of God." His last prayer that could be understood was to this effect: "O Almighty God, who dwellest in light, which no mortal can approach, and where no unclean thing can enter, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts; grant us continually sweet peace, quietness, and assurance of Thy favour!" About an hour before his decease, he was heard to say, "This is a good way! O that all may tread this path in the important hour!" Presently after, he departed so quietly, that it was scarcely perceivable when he drew his last breath.

WHITCHURCH, *September 1st, 1784.*

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